MOWRER IN CHINA

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MOWRER IN CHINA

by

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with six maps by
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NOTE: The title originally planned for this book was *The Dragon Awakes*, but at the last moment, when it was too late to change the headlines throughout the book, it was found that another book had been already published under this title, and it was therefore altered to its present title *Mowrer in China*.

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SRINAGAR
1655

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AN EXPLANATION BY WAY OF A PREFACE

"THIS talk of China wearing out Japan is all very well," said the Experienced Diplomat, "but just how much do you know about China?"

"Practically nothing," I admitted. "This is my first visit."

"Precisely," he grunted. "And you can't learn much about China by mere reading. . . . Have another drink?"

The night was stifling, hot and moist like a Turkish bath. I accepted the offer.

"Boy," shouted my host, "boy, bring Master here another gin and tonic water—and put plenty of ice in it." He turned to me:

"The trouble with most of this talk of China winning is that it comes from people who are either ignorant or emotionally prejudiced. It comes from the missionaries or the other foreigners who have lived a long time in China, or from Radicals who naturally hate Japan. In both cases it is wishful thinking.

"The missionaries know a lot about China and nothing about the rest of the world. How can they judge? They got so used to seeing the Chinese run away from a shadow or sell out their country or their party to the first bidder that, when a few Chinese who had been trained by German experts,

actually fought back, when the Chinese rulers for once didn't sell out, these foreigners went crazy and pronounced China invincible. Rubbish !

"The Radicals are idealists, therefore incapable of seeing anything as it really is.

"Now, I know China and Japan and a good deal of the rest of the world. I don't tell you the Japs are irresistible: any good Occidental army could teach them their place, as General Alexander von Falkenhausen was saying the other day. But the Chinese aren't Occidentals. They have never had much of an army and are not a fighting people. They are individualists; each of them thinks only of himself and his family. Patriotism, as we know it, is remote to them. The Kwangtung crowd around Canton are just merchants and laundrymen: they talk big but they haven't any guts. The Kwangsi crowd and the Northerners can fight for a minute, but sooner or later they will begin quarrelling and then one of them will make his peace with the Japs, and China will collapse like a circus tent when the props are taken away. Just as it always has. Maybe a people can change in the course of a thousand years, though, if you read your Tacitus, you will see that the Germans haven't changed much since Roman days. But who believes you can transform over four hundred million human beings in a generation or two ? China will remain the jellyfish it always has been, at least for a very long time. This talk of New China is hardly better than nonsense."

For a while the Experienced Diplomat pulled at his Manilla cigar. Then he continued.

"Now you are an old newspaper man without any prejudices——"

"Not so," I felt obliged to interrupt. "I am opposed to aggression."

"Well, anyway, you aren't a Communist or a Radical and you've been about enough not to let your sympathies interfere with your judgment. How many armies did you say you had been with? Six? Well, go into China; go to Hankow to see the Chinese leaders; get to the front and see the Chinese Army; get out into the backwoods and meet the older type of cultured Chinese as well as the smart returned students from abroad; then come back and tell me how you feel about China's chances of resisting a great modern country like Japan. I am willing to trust your common sense."

I did all he told me to do. I interviewed scores and scores of foreigners, as well as hundreds of Chinese. I went to Hankow; I saw the Chinese Army on the Northern Front; and after a final swing through the remote interior of China, I flew back to Paris. There was no opportunity of giving a verbal report to my friend, the E. D. This little book is my substitute. This is my judgment.

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THE DRAGON AWAKES

I

THE JELLY-FISH TURNS

AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION WHICH MAY BE OMITTED BY THE LEARNED

CHINA and Japan have fought intermittently for close on thirteen hundred years. It was in the year A.D. 661 that the first Japanese attack on China occurred. The Emperor Saimei sent his General Kotzuke with 27,000 men to attack Korea, which was then a Chinese protectorate. The invaders were met by the Chinese Emperor Kao Chung of the Tang Dynasty who, in a combined land and naval battle at Chemulpo, completely routed them. For more than six hundred years there was peace between the two countries. In the next war, China, under Kublai Khan, was the aggressor. But Kublai's invincible armada that was to conquer Japan, much like that of Philip of Spain, was destroyed by a typhoon. Thus encouraged, Japan repeatedly attempted to pillage or attack China. This process continued to the complete Japanese victory of 1895, when the corrupt Manchu-ruled Chinese Empire virtually collapsed and was compelled to cede outright to Japan all of Korea and the Island of Formosa as

well. Chiefly notable in this long duel was the almost invincible Chinese preference for being let alone (broken only when China was ruled by the anything but peaceful Mongol emperors), and the incurable Japanese *penchant* for war. Each Chinese success brought about a prolonged period of tranquillity, each Japanese victory paved the way for a new aggression. In other words, the most pacific great country known to history, a fountain of art and science, was almost continually upon the defensive against one of the most bellicose, rooster-like peoples on the globe, and able to defend itself chiefly by its bulk, its riches, and its brain power.

The Japanese invasion of China in 1937 was, therefore, anything but a novelty. To the Japanese ruling class, a group of people who saw nothing amiss in the sale of Japanese children as factory workers and prostitutes by their parents, there was also nothing morally wrong in an endeavour to enslave and to stupefy and thus immobilize over four hundred million human beings by forcing the use of narcotics upon them. After all, had not Great Britain exploited whole generations of English children in factories: had not Great Britain compelled China to open its doors to Indian opium less than a century before? Morality aside, however, the date chosen for the new aggression offered evidence of a certain time-lag in the calculation of the Japanese military leaders, whose wits were never of the sharpest. For this last aggression marked an attempt to transform China's semi-colonial position into that of an undeclared but completely vassalized dependency of Japan, and

this at a moment when not only China, but other Asiatic countries like Mesopotamia, Persia, Siam, and even India, had begun to emerge from their previous inferiority toward the conquering Occident. The tide of history was running strongly against imperialism.

At a time when China was positively thrilling in the throes of a national rebirth, the Japanese continued to consider it something less than a nation, to mistake its intensely patriotic leaders for corrupt condottieri and its heroic bamboo-hatted, umbrella-carrying, barefoot soldiers, for mere passive conscripts or avid hirelings. The visual error was clear to the disinterested, but the Japanese eyes were closed by the immensity of the national conceit. They were all the more determined that China should, before it was too late, be reduced to complete colonial servitude; it should, that is, develop little or no industry of its own, but instead, provide an inexhaustible source of raw materials and permanently servile customers to Imperial Nippon.

Now, it was not Japan's fault that China had, in the Nineteenth Century, fallen victim to Occidental colonial imperialism and it was to Japan's honour that its military temperament saved it from a similar fate. Nor was it the Westerners who debased the Chinese, or taught them the use of opium, or the financial corruption, the organic disunity and inefficient administration which marked them out to be the economic and often the military prey of expansive nations. Provocative weakness does invite mistreatment, and the Chinese were both provocative and incredibly weak. As George

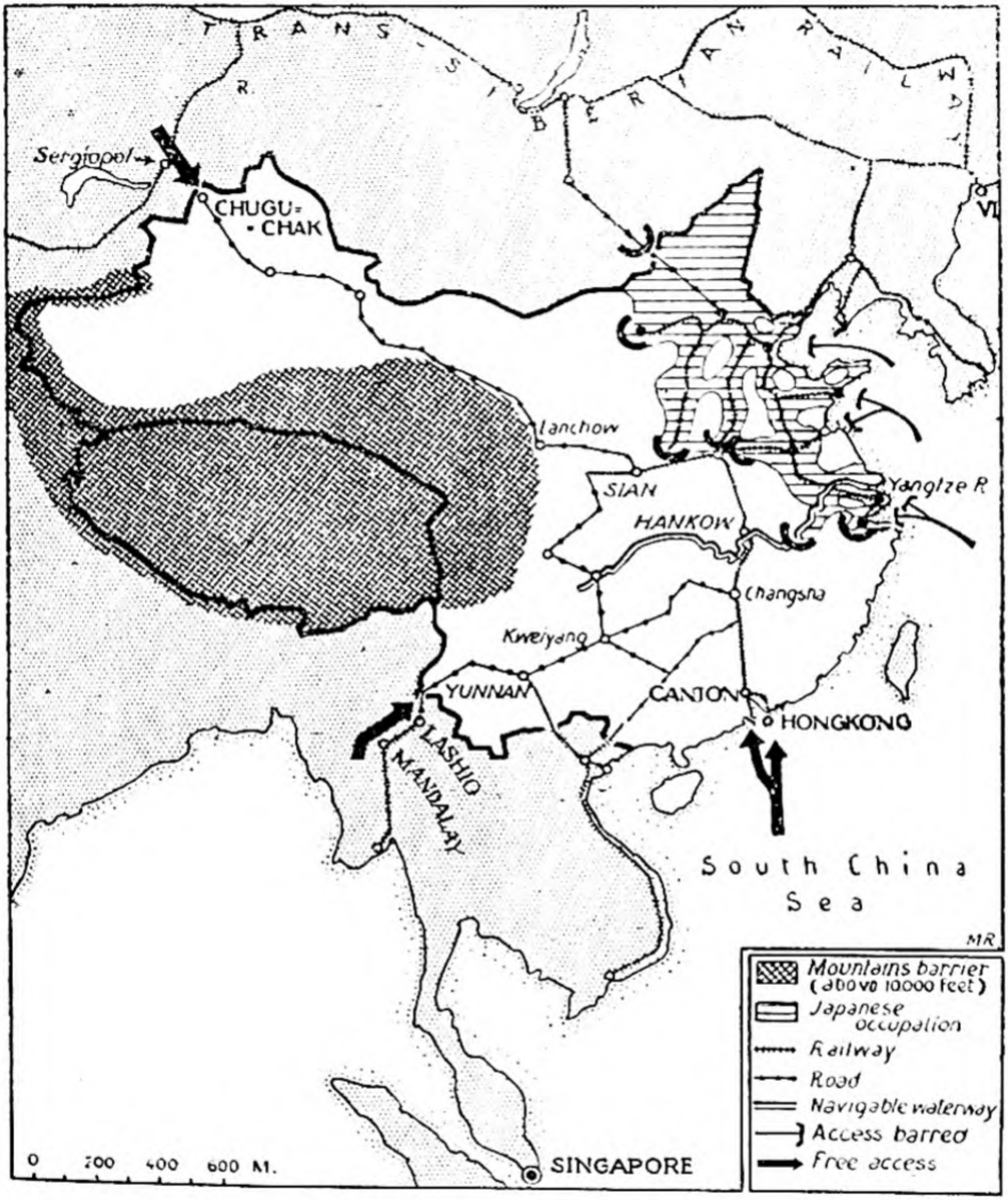
Sokolsky wrote in his controversial book, *The Tinder Box of Asia* (1932):

"The history of the foreign relations of China is a succession of outrages committed against foreign lives and property, and all foreigners gaining thereby a wholly unrelated and disproportionate reward."

At any event, by the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, foreign countries had not only chipped off numerous bits of China, like Hong Kong, as colonies, but had obtained as trading centres any number of so-called "concessions," meaning virtually real possessions, in the midst of the most important Chinese towns. Foreign citizens possessed extra territorial rights, controlled the customs and the postal services, impounded the principal revenues, collected permanent tribute, owned more than half of Chinese industry, had financial liens on all sorts of things offered as collateral on the loans for which the corrupt Chinese were forever pleading. Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, even Portugal, dominated China, with Japanese influence growing from year to year.

As fellow Asiatics themselves narrowly escaping a fate like China's, the Japanese might properly have put themselves at the head of an anti-imperialist movement for Asiatic liberation. Instead, they chose rather to join the Occidental exploiters and eventually to go them one better.

In 1900 Japan was proud to participate with the Western countries on equal terms in "punishing" the Chinese for the Boxer outrages. In 1904 Japan fought and worsted Russia over the right to dominate Manchuria. When the entire European world



ACCESS FROM OUTSIDE

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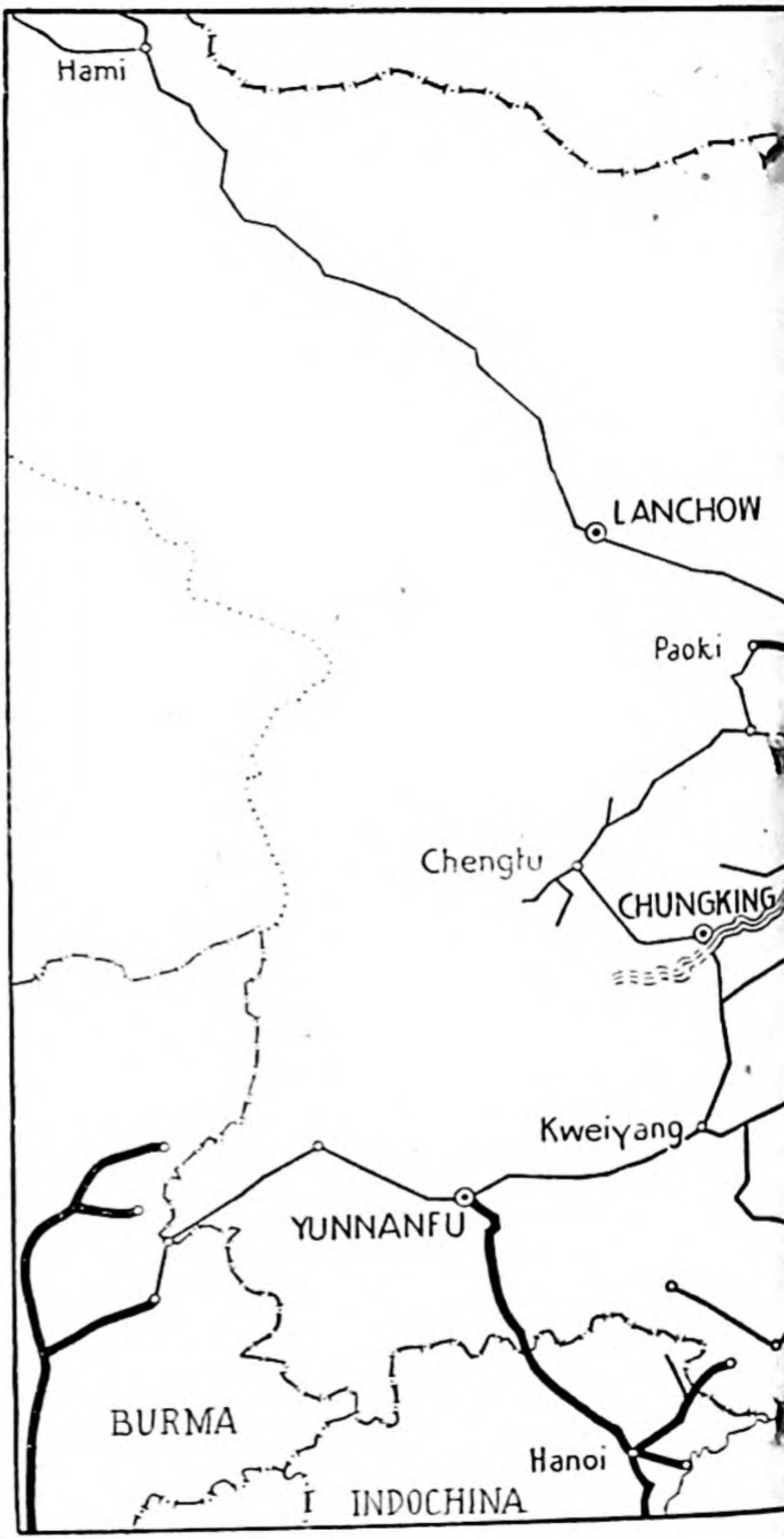

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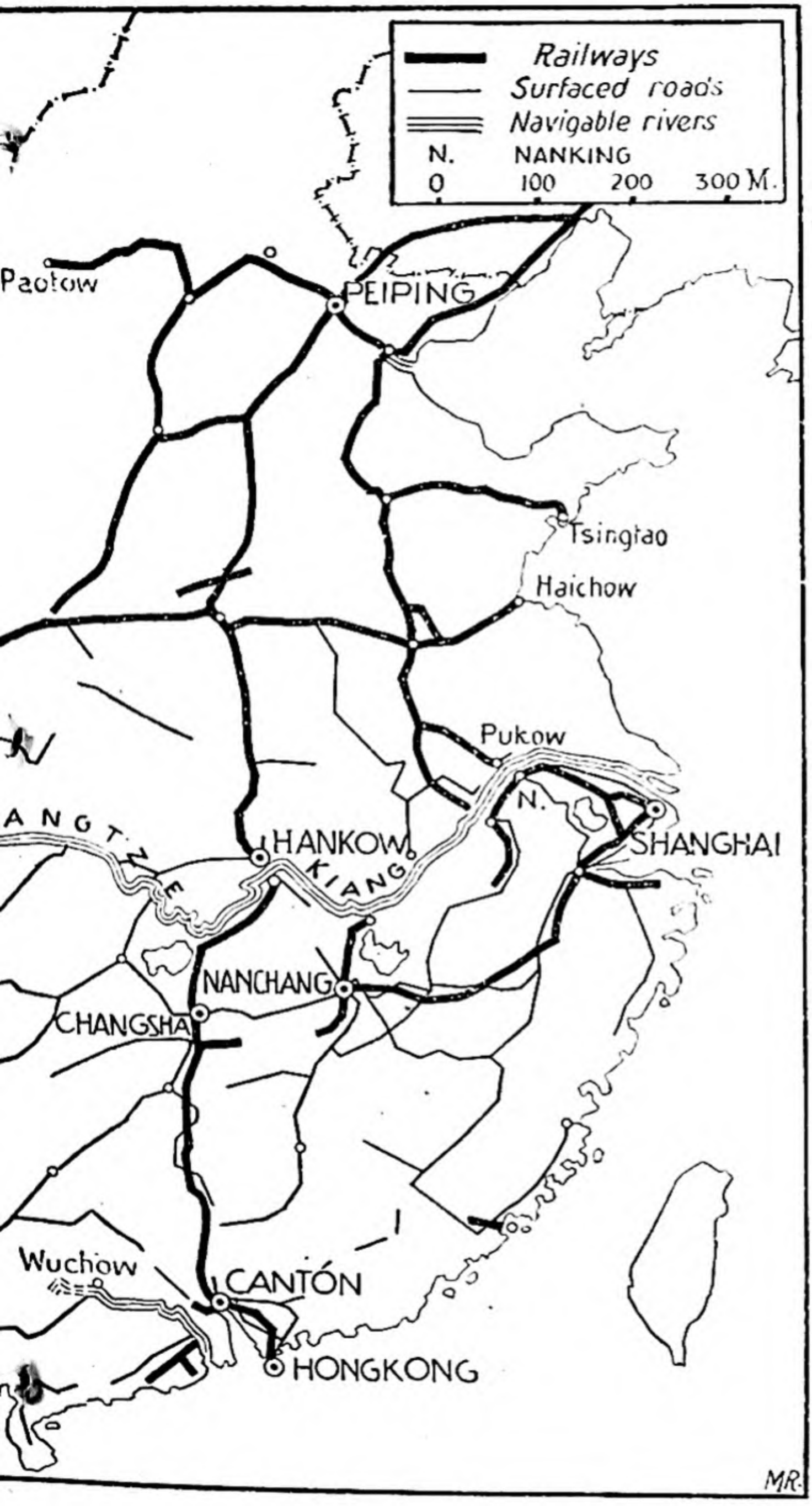
Railways
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KIANG
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CHANGSHA
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HONGKONG
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went to war, Japan seized the German possessions. Then, in 1915, it forced upon China the incredible "Twenty-one Demands" the result of which would have been to turn China into an almost exclusive fishing ground for Japanese financiers, industrialists, and military men. Of the five groups into which the "Demands" were divided, China was bullied into accepting four. All seemed set for the permanent enslavement of the effete Chinese by Japan. Japanese troops occupied large sections of Shantung Province. When, after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Western democracies intervened against their one-time ally, the Japanese made a very serious though clumsy attempt to set up Jap-controlled "White" Russian States in Eastern Siberia and Manchuria. An unexpected obstacle to Japanese designs turned out to be the United States, whose Open Door policy had long been a thorn in the flesh of the other Imperialists. By virtually deciding the war in Europe, and by bringing China into it, the United States did not prevent Japan from inheriting the German Pacific Islands it had occupied, but it did compel Nippon to disgorge what it had swallowed of Shantung Province. A couple of years later American naval preponderance, plus the threat of still greater preponderance, enabled the Americans at Washington to secure British and Japanese acceptance of the Naval Limitations Treaty and the Nine Power Treaty that pledged its signatories unconditionally to respect Chinese territorial integrity and independence.

China was saved, but China was on the verge of anarchy. The Republic of 1911 and of Sun Yat-sen

had broken up into a number of warring provinces, each dominated by a local "war lord." The nominal Central Government at Pekin had no authority. A Russian-sponsored attempt at communist revolution added to the confusion. Though this was the period (the early 'twenties) when "liberal" Japanese Governments claimed to be friendly to China, their friendship continued to take the form of financing, encouraging and using the "war lords" in order to further the spread of anarchy, just as they had used and then broken the first President of the Chinese Republic, Yuan Shi-kai, during the World War. When, between 1925 and 1927, a half communist Kuomintang Government rose to the top and instigated a vast and disgraceful outbreak against Westerners in China, Japan, that later champion of anti-communism, never moved a finger, for such outbreaks obviously promoted the disorder necessary to the furtherance of Japanese ambitions. Subsequently, Chiang Kai-shek broke with his Soviet backers, when the Japanese encouraged him to waste the national energy and substance in fighting the Communists. But when his armies began to move northward in an obviously successful attempt to unite China, the Japanese prevented them by force from entering Manchuria, already marked out for seizure.

In vain! The forces behind Chiang Kai-shek were those of national revival. Renascent China found assistance abroad. In 1931 Chiang's brother-in-law, the gifted T. V. Soong, worked out with the League of Nations a vast plan for the regeneration and modernization of the entire country.

From the viewpoint of the Japanese, something had to be done or China might be permanently consolidated. The Japanese quickly picked a quarrel with the Chinese authorities in Manchuria and seized the country, setting up as a puppet Emperor the last descendant of the Manchus, Pu-yi. And when the indignant Chinese countered by a boycott of Japanese goods, the Japanese provoked an "incident" and, after much more severe fighting than was anticipated, eventually overcame the resistance of the Nineteenth Chinese Route Army at Shanghai.

In violating its pledges to the League of Nations, the Nine-Power Treaty, and the Kellogg Pact, the Japanese were cynically defying the civilized world. Italy alone seemed possessed by a philosophy similar to theirs. And unquestionably they went ahead with some trepidation, though their fears were groundless. The British Conservatives had long been aware of the obstacle that an effective League offered to imperialism, including their own. Furthermore, they were all hot and trembling with that "bolshevitis" from which they seemed destined never to recover. Under British leadership the League limited its reaction to academic disapproval of Japan's action, and while Japan simply walked out of the League the latter sent a scholarly committee of investigation to China which discovered there just what it had known before leaving. The American Secretary of State, Stimson, was unable to arouse any European enthusiasm for opposing Japan, even morally and economically. The League, in its first crisis with what was then considered to

be a major Power, failed. Its member Governments were unredeemed cynics, who mouthed a mealy altruism while secretly condoning the oppression of the weak by the strong. The peoples, insufficiently educated and all unaware that readiness to stop aggression anywhere by force was the kernel of the League and deliberately intended by the League's founders, shrank from anything so "romantic" or "quixotic" as an effort to save rotten old China. And thereby the door was opened upon a return to the naked law of the jungle dear to militarist hearts and the great aim of a world ruled, if necessary sternly, by law, went glimmering. The American-fathered so-called Stimson Doctrine of the non-recognition of territories acquired by force, though generally followed in regard to Manchuria, was later broken even by the United States when Nazi Germany simply jumped upon and annexed Austria.

Japan's seizure of Manchuria began an era of systematic aggression, much of which was connived at by the Government of Great Britain. In 1933 Japan seized the Province of Jehol, contiguous to stolen Manchuria and declared to be essential to the latter's defence, and set up semi-controlled Governments in Hopei and Shahar Provinces. Adolf Hitler slaughtered German democracy and started upon a remarkable career of broken pledges, in one of which, naval rearmament, Great Britain became his open confederate.

In 1936 a Japanese expedition into Suiyuan Province in Inner Mongolia was only withdrawn when it met quite unexpected resistance. Italy, resolved upon violence since the advent of Benito

Mussolini in 1922, finally attacked black Ethiopia in 1935, encouraged by Pierre Laval of France. League action, though tardily undertaken, was so half-hearted and feeble, that though it served to dupe the British people into supporting the Conservatives at the General Election, it did not deter the Italians. Whereupon, the following summer, those two strong-arm dynamists, Mussolini and Hitler, joined their forces in assisting a group of rebel Spanish generals in an insurrection against a perfectly legal but faintly "pink" Spanish Republican Government. The pretext was, naturally, defence against "bolshevism." Sly financiers and ignorant old gentlemen and Fascists everywhere applauded mightily. Thanks to the cowardice of the French and the now almost open pro-fascist leanings of the British Conservative Cabinet, Germany and Italy were allowed to go ahead with a full-fledged invasion of Spain whose ultimate victims could only be France and the British Empire. The spectacle was so edifying—Britain and France frantically preventing the League of Nations from taking any decisions against two bare-faced thieves—that the "third robber," Japan, decided that here was a game worth playing and proceeded to form, with the two assailants of Spain, an "anti-communist" Pact that virtually made Japan a part of the "Rome-Berlin Axis" which was claiming to dominate Europe.

The moment seemed well chosen for once more rescuing the world from "bolshevism." Just at this time (Christmas, 1936) something extraordinary happened in China: Chiang Kai-shek, as the result of a temporary kidnapping and a number of import-

ant discussions with his Chinese patriot captors, made his peace with the Chinese Communists and secured their allegiance. In ten years, from 1927, Chiang extended the rule of the Central Government he represented from five of the eighteen provinces, to all of them save those directly or indirectly under the Japanese boot. And even the Northern rulers, whom the Japanese considered their puppets, began to feel the wave of patriotism that was sweeping the country and to gravitate toward Chiang Kai-shek. For example, General Sung, of the so-called Hopei-Shahar Government, became so busy in his native village sweeping the tombs of his dead ancestors, that he sometimes forgot to obey the orders from Tokyo. Thanks in part to Chiang's wise measures and his efforts at national moral regeneration, thanks to British assistance in stabilizing the Chinese currency in 1935, China in 1937 was actually able to borrow in foreign markets for the first time in its history without collateral and at a low rate of interest. In both the military and economic fields the country was making enormous progress. Anti-Japanese feeling was growing along with self-confidence. Having had to choose between unity or absorption, the Chinese had chosen unity.

What more outrageous "bolshevism" than this could be imagined ! Tokyo considered the northern Five Provinces of China as already belonging to Japan. Was not Japan pushing smuggled goods into them with impunity and thus defrauding the Nanking Government of fifty million dollars a year ? Had not Japan set up an entire semi-official

machine for the debasing of the Chinese and the enriching of the Japanese by the unhampered manufacture and enforced sale of narcotics to Chinamen? The Five Provinces were rich: they contained iron and coal. China, in Japanese eyes, was to become another Korea, a sort of second British India conceivably independent in name, but practically subject to Japan, with hired Chinese officials and corrupt "war lords" playing the role of the Indian maharajahs. Japanese industry demanded new milk, pots to skim, Japanese military new and easy laurels. And so, following the tried and time-honoured technique of first provoking "incidents," and then punishing the Chinese for allowing them to occur, the Japanese struck at the Marco Polo Bridge near Peiping, July 7, 1937. Again, with the blessing of Britain and conceivably of Germany, Japanese troops invaded the coveted provinces while warning the Chinese not to defend them.

Now, of course, this was not the way the Japanese saw the situation. When, therefore, Chiang Kai-shek, against British advice, defied the invaders and sent his soldiers north of the Yellow River to defend Chinese territory, the Japanese determined to teach him a lesson. To them, Japan was fighting in "self-defence"; in defence, that is, of its right to treat the Chinese as it treated the Koreans and the natives of Formosa. Japan had extended the "hand of friendship" to China. What did these Chinese mean by their "insincere" conduct in refusing "to be toads"? The lords of the Far East would show them. . . . A new "incident" —perhaps deliberately provoked by the Navy

against the wishes of the Army—conveniently occurred on Hungjao Road in Shanghai, and Japan launched a second attack against that international town. What had the world's most terrible soldiers to fear? The League would eventually meet and register China's protest, powers like the United States would frown, but none would go to war to save China. Had not Britain's Foreign Minister Anthony Eden, told the House of Commons ten days after the original "incident" that he "sympathized with Japan's difficulties?" Soviet Russia had accepted a minor humiliation in June on the Amur River: the country was weakened by Stalin's too frequent "purges" and was caught off its guard by the suddenness of Japan's action. Besides, what had mighty Japan to fear from American pacifists, pro-fascist British Conservatives, timid French provincials or bearded Bolsheviks? Let them look out. And so, blithely and full of beans, the Japanese militarists set about teaching China a lesson.

The historian may note with surprise how the Japanese leaders, remote physically and psychologically from the Western world, and neighbours of China, guessed to a "T" what the Occidentals would—or rather, would not—do, while utterly failing to foresee the all but unanimous reaction of the Chinese.

By September, 1937, two months after the outbreak of the undeclared war, the *Oriental Economist*, organ of the Japanese financial interests, could write that "Japan faces the most critical situation since the Empire's foundation." For the Chinese jelly-fish had turned and its sting was biting deep into the pride and the body of Nippon.

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II

BRITAIN'S FRONT DOOR TO CHINA

"Now that you have talked with the Governor of the colony, Sir Geoffrey Northcote, you ought really to see the King," my German friend told me. "Unfortunately he is now in England."

"The King?"

"That's what we call him—Sir Vandeleur Grayburn, boss of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank and uncrowned King of this outpost of British interests in China. He could tell you a lot about the foreign attitude toward the Japanese invasion of China and the undeclared war—if he would."

"Is he so well informed?"

"A mine of information. All about China—just as it used to be. Of course, he has the foreign banker's slant but he has plenty of sources and strong opinions. After all, this war will modify the future of all Western interests in China. That is why most of the foreign business men out here—and the Hong Kong group has recently been reinforced by newcomers from Shanghai—are inwardly cursing the Japanese invasion and hoping that the war can either be brought to a standstill fairly soon by what they call here 'an honest compromise,' or else that Japanese and Chinese will fight each other to a draw. In either case the foreign bankers would have a decisive word to say. For if the Japanese continue

to prove unable to deal a mortal blow to China, and the Chinese cannot learn how to stand up in decisive battle against the better trained, better armed Japs, then the fight may boil down to a sort of economic and financial tug-of-war, to see which side can hold out the longer. Japan is far better industrially equipped, far more modern and efficient; China has greater sources of wealth, tapped or potential, and conceivably more staying power. On the other hand, a Japanese victory, or a real Chinese success, cannot but diminish the power of the foreigner in China. Meanwhile, those who control the world's credit resources could do a great deal to tip the balance one way or the other, if only they could make up their minds which side they prefer to see win, if victory there must be. As I said before, it is a pity you cannot have a talk with Sir Vandeleur Grayburn."

As one who had but set foot in the Far East I would have welcomed a talk with Hong Kong's "King," but it is doubtful if I should have been much wiser for it, for I had met the "imperialistic" or colonial attitude before. Here in this tiny colony, set on the rim of China like a sort of green cloud-wrapped Naples on a tropical sea, it was immediately plain how loath the many foreigners were to admitting that they might be compelled to accept either a victory of national China or the virtual subjugation of China by Japan. Mediation, so plausible to many in Europe and America, already seemed infinitely remote. Neither China nor Japan was in the mood for it. Most of the foreign business men one met, either of the old-fashioned red-faced

type, or the younger less cocksure sort, were unable, after ten months of warfare, to make up their minds just which side they would like to see win. Sentimentally, of course, most foreigners, including the Germans, naturally sympathized with China as the victim of a brutal and unprovoked aggression. They had not forgotten the Japanese conduct at Shanghai, the machine-gunning of the British Ambassador, the sinking of the *Panay*. They were writhing under each new set of "orders" received from the Japanese naval forces lying off the mouth of the Pearl River that flows down from Canton, the deliberate firing on an Imperial Airways 'plane off the Ladrone Islands in February, 1938; they waxed sarcastic over the boasts of Toyoishi Nakamura, Japanese Consul General in Hong Kong, formerly in Canton, that Japan would take Hankow and the Chinese would collapse "within three months."

For Japanese military prestige had fallen to a low ebb. Few of the foreign business men had forgotten how they were virtually squeezed out of Jap-ruled Manchuria in defiance of promises and the "principle of the open door." There was a vast amount of ill-feeling concerning a reported Japanese attempt to freeze British merchants out of the wool, fur and skins trade in North China, with the formation of a Japanese wool export association to monopolize commerce. And the Japanese Consul General in Sydney, Australia, defined the Australian embargo on iron ore as something which "strained relations" between Australia and Japan. A Japanese subjugation of China, the

setting up of a new Mongol puppet State, Mongokuo, in Inner Mongolia, might mean an even worse blow to foreign interests in China and particularly to Hong Kong, which was enjoying a magnificent trade boom, due exclusively to the war.

At the beginning of the aggression there is no doubt but that the majority of foreign business interests rather favoured a Japanese victory. In the first place, they anticipated it, and business men easily follow the philosopher Hegel in believing that "the real is the only rational." Furthermore, they felt themselves more akin in spirit to the presumed "conquerors," modernized, efficient, and out for gain, than to the sloppy, hard-working but essentially incompetent, corrupt, individualistic, and xenophobe Chinese. (This, at least, was the picture that had been handed down by the "old China hands" who, like Sir Vandeleur Grayburn, had been on the ground for ever so long and ought to know.) These people decided long ago that Japan represented a "principle of order and discipline," while, since the reconciliation with the Communists in 1936, they had watched Chiang Kai-shek with a disapproval which Chiang's non-aggression pact with the Soviets had turned into definite suspicion that China was aiding in the "spread of bolshevism." (In Hong Kong, one learned, bolshevism meant less a system of collectivized economy, for which few believed China to be ripe, than the growth of Soviet Russian influence and the curtailing of the amazing privileges of Westerners.) Japan began the invasion of China with a relatively large backing among important foreigners. But pro-Japanese feeling

waned rapidly with the progress of the war, which revealed, at the same time, the unsuspected arrogance, the surprising incapacity and the insatiate greed of the Japanese.

It began at Shanghai. Few foreigners who underwent an experience with Japanese officers or soldiery there managed to continue hoping for a Japanese victory. Japanese behaviour toward the Chinese at Nanking and in the north went beyond what even hardened colonials, with memories that went back to Boxer times, could stomach. The Japanese bombardments of open cities, their positive rage to obliterate Chinese universities and educational institutions, their frightful treatment of Chinese women and girls under the eyes of their superior officers, these sickened the foreign colonies in the Concessions. The Chinese could be incredibly heartless and brutal according to Occidental standards. The Japanese were unquestionably worse.

Still, the Japs seemed bound to win. The taking of Nanking convinced most Occidentals on the spot, as well as the Japanese Generals, that Japan had already won. And then something happened: the vast ineptitude of the Japanese General Staff and the utter lack of discipline and unity within the army began to be clear. Foreigners, looking on with passionate interest, saw how the Japanese "columns," superior in every sort of equipment, dared not quit the railways and main roads and navigable rivers, and often proved unable to keep the bold Chinese guerrilla bands from cutting communications along them. They saw the so-called Japanese occupation boil down to long thin strings

stretched across vast areas, in most of which Chinese civil administration continued to function under orders from the Chinese in Hankow. They saw how the Chinese "puppet régimes" failed to win the adherence of any real portion of the population, who turned upon and murdered the "Chinese traitors" who served on them at every opportunity. Such régimes, the only hope of making Japanese occupation effective, simply could not restore order. The Japanese controlled "Provisional Government" at Peiping was unable to extend its authority beyond the city walls. The Chinese "Heads" of the "Reformed Government," set up by the Japanese armies at Nanking, found it healthier to settle down under Japanese protection in the New Asia Hotel at Shanghai.

On the other hand, guerrilla fighting went on all around the edges of Shanghai itself; Chinese mobile units came and went at night virtually as they pleased with the assistance of the entire population. They ambushed Japanese trucks on the highways, derailed Japanese troop trains; killed quantities of isolated Japanese soldiers in isolated detachments or remote outposts.

The foreign business and banking houses in the Far East are not primarily there for the realization of any special political ideals. In 1937 a Chinese victory, aside from opening the door on what was called bolshevism, might conceivably, in the minds of the business men, have meant the ejection of the foreigner from China under conditions of appalling anarchy and financial loss. The victorious Chinese might have refused to pay their honest debts or

recognize foreign privilege. But a Japanese occupation of China gradually began to look even less delightful for foreigners. China's unexpected military prowess and staying power obviously doomed the Japs to ten or twenty years of "pacification" during which trade and farming would be at an extremely low ebb. In the occupied regions there was a currency chaos with five kinds of money, a situation that was obviously going to get worse. Until the Japs advanced much further into China, Shanghai and most of the Treaty Ports would remain cut off from their supply and distribution markets. One had but to compare their situation with that of Hong Kong, prosperous as the war port of entry for the Chinese Republic, to realize the danger. As a temporary condition, this might be tolerated if there was any certainty that it would eventually be followed by a return to the Open Door policy. But it was exactly this certainty that the Japanese attitude in the first months of the war destroyed. A nation with such a Government, with such vast economic and political appetites, seemed bound, in any case, to seize and hold such Chinese economic districts as would make it independent of foreign imports. A notable instance was the cotton growing region of North China. Before the war it produced about as much cotton as Japan normally imported; efficient Japanese directors could double the output and make Japan entirely independent of American and other cotton growers.

The Japanese, unable as they were to make their occupation militarily effective, nonetheless initiated an elaborate plan for destroying Chinese factories

outside the occupied zone and within it for ousting Occidental interests and monopolizing Chinese markets and industry. At Shanghai complaints multiplied in the foreign consulates of all sorts of interference, from petty annoyance to downright robbery, at the hands of Japanese military and civil authorities, who behaved as though the International Concession were their personal property. And almost immediately they set about making it so by the formation of huge official companies to monopolize mining, power transportation, and most of trade. Tariffs were speedily revised in favour of Japan, at least on paper. Everything pointed to the establishment of an air-tight Japan-Manchuria-China economic bloc on the basis of nearly complete monopoly, if the Japs could complete the occupation by the acquisition of Central China as far west as Hankow. The Japanese military authorities began to exact "fees" and other forms of "squeeze" from the foreign owners of business and mills as the price of continued operation. The attitude of the foreign Governments was so spineless that in many cases foreign victims, sure of receiving no effective backing from their several Governments, preferred not to complain to their Consuls, lest they be subject to reprisals. Redress for foreign interests was more or less rendered impossible, despite manifold threats, because the Japanese hid behind the screen of "puppet" Chinese Governments, for whose actions they disclaimed any responsibility. By a system of export licences Japanese exporters were deliberately favoured, while against this plot, to delude and ease out the Occidental, individual Occidental firms were helpless.

Obviously none of this escaped the foreigner. How judge it if not as part of a vast movement of "Asia for the Japanese"? What wonder if foreign opinion in places like Hong Kong underwent rapid change? A Japanese triumph would clearly be disastrous for the Westerners. So long as they continued to fear a Chinese victory, the best they might hope for was the continuance of just enough Chinese resistance to baffle the invaders, but not enough to enable the Chinese to expel them. While the war was going on, Japan could not clinch its hold on China. Without a strangle-hold, Japanese monopolistic exploitation under a totalitarian economic system could not really get under way. Could the war be prolonged to the exhaustion of both sides, outside influence might have the final word. This was the hope still prevalent when I reached Hong Kong.

But already many of the younger business men had felt compelled to relinquish it. Many of them believed that China stood the better chance to win. This belief was based on observation of something called New China. To the older fellows, or many of them, New China was just a bunch of Canton fire-crackers, going off with a loud noise and much smoke, leaving everything just as it was. To them the Chinaman, though perhaps no longer a creature to be "kicked off the dock" by the Occidental "master," was still essentially the feeble, corrupt being he had always been. The younger men doubted this. One of them explained to me the change in China in terms of growing and effective Chinese resentment of just such boisterous manifestations of Occidental superiority. "The Chink had

been insolent as hell," he concluded, "and I longed to knock him down. But what was the use? If I had I knew he would have shot me dead. Believe me, your average Chinese is no longer taking anything from anybody."

For, as I said before, business men are realists, or try to be.

Hong Kong was enjoying a very real though precarious prosperity. Wandering along the docks beside the railroad terminal at Kowloon, it was easy to see why. Half a dozen freighters were tied up, while a horde of bare-footed coolies, the smile upon their faces even more inscrutable than usual, unloaded packing cases of various sizes and shapes. Most of these contained ammunition or high explosive, but there were boxes of rifles and machine-guns. Some cases, I afterwards learned, held airplane motors from the United States. Most of the munitions I saw being unloaded came from Germany, but the British port authorities said that little more was expected from that quarter. The quota from America was, they thought, distinctly smaller than was being sent to Japan. The Soviets were becoming the greatest source of Chinese supplies.

Anyone could stand by and check up the quantities; anyone, that is, except the Japanese. Not even Toyoishi Nakamura cared to send Japanese agents, notebook in hand, to watch the docks. To do so might have been to condemn them to sudden death, not to speak of the scandal of "international incidents." For whatever the colour of their passports, the Chinese in Hong Kong were just about as Chinese as those in Hankow or Shanghai, and

as little disposed to stand for spying by Japanese. Little the Japs needed to worry: had they not friends among the foreigners, and notably in the Italian Consulate? Among the foreigners in China only the Italians were giving whole-hearted support to Tokyo. The Germans, despite the change in the wind at Berlin and the threatened recall of the German military advisers under General von Falkenhausen, remained fixed in their preference for China. There were numerous Germans in Hong Kong, and they made no bones of their disapproval of Berlin's love for the Japanese. In the meantime, they, too, were contributing to Hong Kong's prosperity, and had helped make it the chief port of entry for China. Numerous wealthy Chinese, ever quick to take advantage of business opportunities, and perhaps aware of the charm of a city immune to the bombings that were making a purgatory of nearby Canton, had chosen Hong Kong as their temporary residence, and their wives and daughters, with the incomparable elegance of the well-dressed Chinese woman, gave its streets and ferry-boats added attractiveness.

Why worry so long as the boom lasted, though from the golf course to the north of the city one could sometimes hear the machine-guns as the Chinese fired on the Japanese naval 'planes that bombed the precious railroad to Canton and Hankow just outside the frontiers of the Colony?

But it is difficult being nonchalant on a volcano. Britishers in Hong Kong had formed a Volunteer Corps and were drilling frequently. British warships (though not nearly enough to tackle the Japanese

fleet) were constantly at anchor or coming and going across the incomparable harbour. Really, all Hong Kong was fascinated by the strange deadly struggle going on "in China 'cross the bay." How would the cat jump?

Two attitudes seemed possible. In view of London's anything but heroic attitude, the first was easier: try to be on the best possible terms with both sides, while hoping for a compromise or a draw.

The second attitude was less flaccid. Why not help to determine the outcome? By extending financial help to one or the other side, the foreign business interests, through their backers at home, might, indeed, say the decisive word my German friend expected. If mediation seemed impossible, and compromise a dream, somebody's victory ought perhaps to be hastened. Under the circumstances this somebody could only be China.

Facing the busy docks, talking with the business men beside beautiful Repulse Bay, I reached the following conclusion:

So long as Hong Kong remained prosperous, the foreigners would be content to let nature take its course. But once let the Japanese cut Hong Kong off from China, and Colony neutrality could quickly give way to definite partisanship. At that moment (provided Japan still gave the same impression of weakness), how could foreign interests better serve international law and morality than by extending generous help to China, the innocent victim of aggression?

(Provided, of course, that China would then be certain to win.)

III

BLEEDING CANTON

NEW CHINA began at Canton, the "city of rams," the city of revolutions, the birthplace of Sun Yat-sen and Chinese nationalism, the chief window of China on the great wide world. The "rams" are largely forgotten, along with the legend that explained them. But pride in "revolutions," meaning primarily the great national revolution whereof the late Sun Yat-sen was the clearest voice, is strong with the modern Cantonese. And the city's role of gateway to the world, and chiefly to the Occidental world, is as marked as ever. First Chinese town with which foreigners came in contact—the Arabs came here a thousand years ago, the Portuguese in 1511, the American and British tea clippers early in the Nineteenth Century—Canton, or rather, Canton's citizens, have continually gone out to meet the foreigner at home. It is in Canton that most of the Chinese abroad originate and it is to Canton that they return later, laden with wealth acquired by their ceaseless labour and their nimble minds. Most important of all, it was to Canton that, in the Twentieth Century, most of the foreign-trained Chinese students returned bearing the ideas that were later to blossom as the Chinese national renascence. Little wonder that the revolution that overthrew the Manchus started here, to be com-

pleted later in the battles around the three Wu-han cities, of which Hankow is the best known. "Everything new originates in Canton," say the Chinese, who should know. To understand what was going on in China, one could hardly do better than start with a visit to Canton.

Forget Shameen, one of those hygienic but tiresome "concessions" Occidental States succeeded in wringing from the Chinese in the latter's decades of weakness, and where the foreigners still live a ghetto-like existence modelled on the dullest of Occidental models. Canton proper, Chinese Canton, the city of over a million patriots, is a fascinating paradox. From a window on the tenth floor of the modernly built and managed Oi Kwan Hotel, you could look over the incredible boat-dwelling population, over a hundred thousand !— that lives and dies in houseboats anchored twenty deep along the Pearl River banks. The River itself is like a giant pond heavy with silt across whose surface hundreds and hundreds of insect craft come and go, rowed, skulled, pushed, pulled, naphtha- and steam-propelled, with the huge junks and river boats and an occasional steamer rising high in their midst. This seems ancient China at its most picturesque and fearful. Leave the hotel and you are surrounded by a howling crowd of beggars in rags and sores, shrieking rickshaw boys, peddlers and idle citizens. Many of the streets are still as narrow, dirty and fascinating as those for which this tropical city was once famous. But look a little closer, talk with the leading citizens, investigate the growing civic institutions, and what do you find ? A modern

up-to-date well-trained élite gradually raising and improving a population that, despite its poverty and dirt, is eager for change.

Ex-students dominate, the majority returned from the United States, bringing American ways, an American accent, an American enthusiasm for efficient action. Educated men from Columbia, Chicago, Wisconsin Universities, co-operate with others from Cambridge and Leipzig, the Paris Sorbonne and the schools of Japan. A snappy young man from the artillery officers' school turned out to have spent nine years at the military academy at Turin and to have commanded Italian batteries in military manœuvres. The Provincial Governor, Wu Te-chen, had been one of those mayors of Shanghai whose enlightened administration made that city famous. The Mayor, Tseng Yang-fu, an ex-mining engineer from Pittsburgh University, and a true native of the home province, had served his country in a dozen important positions with all the energy of an American go-getter. In addition to being Mayor of the third largest city in China, he was a member of the all powerful Executive Committee of the *Kuomintang*, Vice Minister of Railways, and Acting Commissioner of Finance for the Province of Kwangtung.

Modern minded professors from the Lingnan American Missions University, and the Chinese Sun Yat-sen National University, outside the town discuss the latest sociological theories of Pareto and the intricacies of currency management in a machine civilization, amid streets where sit in their shops perhaps the most ancient and skilled artisans

of the world. The furniture makers, ivory carvers, inlayers of silver and feathers and mother-of-pearl, cutters of jade, artistic potters and grass weavers still go on as ever. But meanwhile, I felt a mentality directing their destinies, a mentality that was thinking of speedily industrializing China and completing the process of economic emancipation from Japan and, to a lesser extent, from the West.

Plenty of old temples and several superb pagodas had survived the aerial bombardments; but the modern leaders would rather show you the Sun Yat-sen University, the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall and Memorial Tower, all dedicated to the man whose three-fold programme of nationalism, democracy, and popular livelihood (which can, but need not necessarily, be understood as something approaching socialism), became the Bible of the ruling *Kuomintang* party, and through it, of modern China. None could visit Canton without feeling that the seeds of a new national State had taken firm root, and that war or no war, the hard-headed veteran foreigners of Hong Kong cafés and the Japanese military would hardly again see the ancient, decadent, corrupt, disunited and submissive China whose profitable exploitation was their ideal. This was the fond hope of the Japanese, and it turned out to be an illusion. The wheel of history turned; mistreatment galvanized a once proud nation; the missionaries began the process; foreigners demonstrated the new machine technique; Sun Yat-sen put through the political revolution; thousands of returning Chinese students provided competent

native technicians and the emotional power; Chiang Kai-shek became the spear-head. Back in the 'twenties, the Western Powers began to retreat from their imperial positions. Only Japan persisted —with the result that New China, nourished on hatred of Japanese bullies, grew up almost overnight. In my travels in China, I met few foreigners who thought the Chinese clock could be put back.

The process of national renascence would have gone on under any circumstances; the Japanese invasion marvellously hastened the process. Here again Canton was in the van. Long before the occurrence of 1937's little "incident" at the Marco Polo Bridge near Peiping, the cry to defy Japan was loud in Canton. By 1938 hatred of the northern upstart invader had became universal in the city and in Kwangtung Province. There may have been some exceptions: the Japanese Consul General in Hong Kong boasted that he had "sweetened" Canton palms in the course of a few months to the tune of a million yen. But I suspect that this money might equally well have been invested at the fantan tables of nearby (Portuguese) Macao. For those who accepted the bribes would have difficulty in fulfilling a promise of defeatism and betrayal. They tried once and were themselves tricked and suppressed. Merchants, the Cantonese, were and perhaps always will be. So were the citizens of ancient Venice. But lack of patriotism was hardly a Venetian weakness.

Seat of the Fourth Route Army, located at the apex of the Pearl River Delta at the junction of

the railway to Hankow and the railway to Hong Kong, Canton's military importance grew as the war progressed. With the entire Chinese coast as far south as Amoy virtually in Japanese hands, with Japanese warships and airplane carriers lying off the delta and occupying the old "pirate islands" called the *Ladrones*, with Hong Kong as the chief port of entry for the imported war material for China's hit-and-run defence action against invasion, Canton became chiefly responsible for the maritime defence of the entire south. At the time of my visit, few believed that the Japanese would defy Britain and the world by attempting to seize Hong Kong. But they knew that the occupation of Canton and the cutting of communications between this city and the north would force the Chinese to fall back upon the French railway from Indo-china to Kunming, in the south-west, and the long interior communications with Burma and Soviet Russia.

That the Japanese early realized this, is clear. Hence their virtual blockade of the entire Chinese coast with the Pearl River mouth; hence their continual talk of occupying Canton; hence the continuous series of murderous air raids upon the city itself, with the factories and universities as the specially preferred targets. Japanese naval fliers came over once, twice, four times a day and dropped their high explosives upon the defenceless city. The casualties soon ran into thousands. A single bomb would often kill nearly a hundred people and wipe out half a dozen of the flimsy houses built for a tropical climate. Once a squadron of Chinese

airmen, reputed Russians, went over and wiped out the Japanese air bases on the Ladrones, but the Japanese soon re-established them and the murderous bombardment continued day after day. Mayor Tseng Yang-fu made a moving appeal to mayors of all free cities throughout the world, asking for their moral solidarity, lest by their immobility they might be hastening the day when their own cities would be treated in the same way. There were protest meetings in Paris and London, and finally the American Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, said he intended to discourage the further sale of American military airplanes to Tokyo. It was indeed sad for an American to realize that this daily slaughter of innocent non-combatants with the single purpose of terrorism was largely being accomplished with materials furnished by American companies for a price. Far better have let the Japanese obtain their murder machines from their totalitarian fellow aggressors, Germany and Italy, and at least have kept American hands clean. For despite the Secretary's indignation, despite the all but universal condemnation, the attacks continued. The Sun Yat-sen University, outside the city, the pride of New China, had to be brought within the city where at least its students and professors could not be singled out for special punishment but merely took their chances with the other Cantonese. The American Lingnan Missions University was struck. For the purpose was terrorism, pure and simple. And though life in Canton became as much a hell as anything the natives of Madrid had to put up with, the Cantonese, so far from being

terrorized, simply stiffened in their determination to rid China once and forever from molestation by the contemptible Japanese. Under this inhuman "strafing" the brave became fanatics, and the tepid determined.

Strange to say, though the railroad from Hong Kong and to Hankow was repeatedly bombed, it was as steadily repaired and the steady trickle of war material continued to enter China. Stations destroyed were rebuilt, trains hit were replaced. And traffic went on about as usual, despite information allegedly furnished the Japanese by Italian officials in Hong Kong. The trains were, if possible, more crowded than in normal times and there was much good-humoured joking among the passengers during the endless delays caused by air alarms. Both as means of sowing terror and as air blockade, the raids on Canton were a failure.

Had I not seen the same sort of wild courage in Spain, I should not have believed that a population could remain so calm under such provocation. Within Canton, Dr. K. T. Chu, graduate of Indiana Medical School, organized a high class system of first-aid in case of air attacks. While the bombs were still exploding and before anyone had left the few real shelters, bold young people of both sexes were on the spot, digging out the victims and doing what they could until the flying ambulance squads appeared. Often, within an hour, all the movable results of a murderous and wanton attack had disappeared. Meanwhile, Canton's excellent hospitals had been put on a war footing and steps were being taken to prevent the occurrence and spread

of any real epidemics. Among other measures, anti-cholera injections were being made at the rate of three thousand a day with serum prepared in Canton according to League of Nations standards.

The Cantonese were never reputed a martial race, but hatred of the Japanese was transforming them. Cantonese infantry and aviators did excellent work at Shanghai. The Province of Kwangtung was maintaining sixty or eighty thousand soldiers at the front (there were suggestions from outside that this number ought to be materially increased), and literally hundreds of thousands of new recruits were being trained and equipped. In addition, there were provincial militia (called "Able-Bodied Youth Units") of both sexes available for local emergencies. General Yu Han-mo, the Military Governor, was moving heaven and earth to prepare to repel a conceivable invasion. His chief of staff, General Chow, a German-trained soldier with great experience (he had been at Shanghai in 1931–2 with the famous Nineteenth Route Army), seemed completely unworried. Certain of the younger officers were spoiling for a fight. The watery terrain of the delta offered innumerable obstacles while a march around the delta was long and arduous. The Japs had landed with impunity at Amoy a few weeks before, for Amoy is an island at the mercy of a powerful fleet. But Swatow or Bias Bay near Hong Kong would be another story, General Chow thought. The Chinese were confident that they could repulse any Japanese offensive unless carried out with a vast expeditionary force of eighty to a hundred and twenty thousand

men, with fifty or sixty transports, and a vast financial expenditure. Without relinquishing their campaign against Hankow, the Japanese presumably lacked the troops for another offensive, while the Chinese, with their limitless man power looked forward to the creation of a "southern front," an added opportunity of exhausting their adversary.

But the Japanese are a cocky lot, and militarists with an omnipotence complex do not always follow the rules of reason. Therefore an offensive in the south was not excluded from Chinese calculations. The Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Geoffrey Northcote, warned the members of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps that should an attack occur, Hong Kong would be lucky if it had six days in which to prepare its defences. The French, whose Indo-China army had previously numbered only twenty thousand, of which five thousand Frenchmen, appropriated a couple of hundred million francs for increasing the force. A British passenger airplane was fired on by the Japs in February, 1938; French protests against Japanese interference with French shipping were becoming ever more energetic, though little was said of them publicly.

In the streets of Canton were vividly defiant posters, lectures on civic duties in war time were being given by men of foreign experience. Everywhere one met an atmosphere of self-confidence and easy defiance of Japan. Everywhere were men (and girls) in uniform, giving an impression of readiness to meet the enemy. To believe them,

you needed only to hear them sing the new war songs characteristic of China's first great effort at military defence. Strange, atonal melodies carrying the unmistakable message that China had "come back."

IV

FOUR FANTASTIC CITIES

1. HANKOW

HANKOW, chief of the Wuhan triplet of cities, built about the junction of the Han River with the vast Yangtse, is the southern end of a railroad from Peiping. It is essentially a creation of the foreigners, and formerly housed five large Concessions or trading stations. Germany forfeited its Concession as a result of the World War; Soviet Russia voluntarily renounced its exterritorial privileges throughout China as a matter of doctrine; Great Britain sacrificed its Concession (with certain reservations) in 1926, and France seemed about to do likewise. But the French changed their mind and held on to their "sovereign rights" over a few acres of a city which they had, after all, done considerable to build up. The Japanese Concession was abandoned by its owners and taken over by the Chinese early in the war. These five Concessions, four of which had reverted to China, lie contiguous to one another along the Yangtse River. With the exception of the Japanese, they form essentially an Occidental town, built in the Occidental style, in the midst of a vast Chinese city that was until the outbreak of the war the centre of the Chinese tea-growing industry.

In the centre of Hankow the French Concession was, when I reached the city and found lodgings in the Hotel *Wagons-Lits et Terminus*, guarded by French soldiers, with barbed wire ready to be installed at the slightest need. The French had announced their intention of protecting their rights and property as inflexibly against the Japanese at Hankow as they had at Shanghai and Tientsin. On account of this inflexibility, while British prestige was abysmal and American prestige rather low, French prestige was high throughout China. Foreigners, whose property happened to lie within the French Concession, were thanking their stars for the relative protection it afforded against Japanese air raids or Japanese seizure. Other foreign interests—and most of the business at Hankow was foreign—were looking forward hopefully to the French to protect their property outside, in case of Japanese occupation of the town. And the French, to back their verbal resolution, were organizing and equipping a foreign (mostly French) volunteer corps to assist the bold but numerically weak body of regular troops in defending the Concession. For obvious reasons, all civilians, foreign or Chinese, who could find a place to live within the French Concession, preferred to do so.

Along the bank of the Yangtse lay the warships of several Powers. Gunboats mostly—mere "token ships" so far as real resistance to the Japanese fleet was concerned, but invaluable as a last refuge for foreign residents in danger and as a symbol that the proprietary Powers had not by any means renounced their rights.

Further up the Yangtse and across the Han River, Hanyang city offered little of interest, save swarming Chinese life and an ancient arsenal.

Not so Wuchang, ancient Chinese agglomeration, built around Serpent Hill and surrounded by a wall seven miles long. Once the capital of the Kingdom of Chu, later that of the Kingdom of Wu, famous throughout the country for its "street of a thousand shops," Wuchang reached its highest interest as the northern point of the railway to Canton and Hong Kong (the prolongation south of the bridgeless Yangtse of the Peiping-Hankow railway) and the residence of *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-chek. For although after the fall of Nanking the capital had theoretically been moved to Chung-king far to the west, China was being not only defended but governed from Wuchang.

But when the foreigners say Hankow they mean all three Wuhan cities taken together. Here, after the fall of Nanking, one might meet nearly every-thing that counted in China. The ancient tea centre had become the residence of most of the personalities of the country. *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek and his wife came and went quickly, secretly, effectively, somehow contriving always to dodge the Japanese airmen who seemed only too well informed of their movements but who always arrived just one jump behind. Here, until July, 1938, were all the Cabinet and the various Ministries, with their many bureaucrats. Here were the other politicians—the big shots of the *Kuomintang* with their families, the members of the three *Yuans* that claimed to govern, and of the Military Council that

seemed actually to share the power with Chiang himself. Here were all sorts of subsidiary organizations. To Hankow came the foreign business men with matters of personal profit to attend to. Around the Headquarters, grumbling but reasonably well cared for, collected the foreign newspaper men, who, perhaps properly, could not see why their obvious sympathy for China did not constitute more of a pass into Chinese confidence. To Hankow came those startlingly pretty Chinese women from Shanghai and Peiping, who had fortunately not waited for Japanese occupation before clearing out, their very presence turning the clean but inconceivably dull streets of the foreign Concessions into something gay and exciting. And to Hankow, more or less unwillingly, came finally the members of the Diplomatic Corps, whose Governments insisted on their remaining in contact with the rulers of the country to which they were accredited.

A few of them found the war atmosphere inspiring and the Chinese conflict the most fascinating thing in the world. More were frankly peevish. Hankow was, they said, a "hole." They loudly resented the inadequte housing, the difficulties of obtaining this or that "indispensable" article. Personally, I found the food on their tables more than adequate, their wines of reasonably good quality, their service far better than one could expect. But I had not known the ease of pre-war China to the foreign "masters" who came and went from one Concession to another, as though all China were but an adjunct of these Occidental oases. How those in Hankow envied the other diplomats, who, like the British and the

French Ambassadors, preferred the ease and relative security of civilized cosmopolitan Shanghai, or the delights of medieval Peiping, to this rather austere provincial atmosphere created by a people in whose vital struggle most of the diplomats took surprisingly little part. With the foreign diplomats, considerations of China's war for enfranchisement were mixed with considerations of what outlandish place they might next be asked to live in, if and when the Japanese took Hankow. Some of their political temperatures went up and down sometimes twice in a day, according to the military news or to the efficiency of their own digestive apparatus. China could hold. China might hold, of course. China was at the end of its rope. Finished. Virtually, of course. Not yet beaten. Not quite beaten. Not necessarily, only probably. Still capable of long resistance. In fact, sure to resist. Formidable. Magnificent. Invincible. And to the novice in China it was just a little bewildering. Who said Man is a reasonable animal?

For this confusion the Chinese themselves were partly responsible. Partly just because they remained Chinese, with ways that were not Occidental. But also because they always claimed too much. They announced the recapture of cities when their troops were still on the outskirts; they refused to admit losses days after all the world knew; they stubbornly clung to the notion that unless the Chinese told them, the advancing Japanese would not really know the names of the places where they were. All of which undermined Chinese credit with the foreigners of the usual type.

Not, however, with the foreign Military Attachés.

Officers of several countries—German military advisers, Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, were sure of two facts: first, that the Chinese had showed far more military prowess, far more national morale and unity and staying power than anyone had given them credit for; second, that the Japanese armed forces were a greatly over-estimated quantity, their strategy deficient, their tactics antiquated, their efficiency so low that it was very doubtful if Japan really had any serious claim to being considered a Great Power. And on the basis of these two facts, several very important political adjustments were likely to take place, the most important of which was the recognition by Great Britain, France and Russia that Japan was, so long as its hands were tied in China, far too weak to threaten foreign interests in the Far East.

2. CHUNGKING

The none too modern hydroplane takes off from the airport on the Hankow side of the Yangtse, and, leaving the great stream well to the south, flies westward across a giant bend. Below is the water-bespeckled surface of Central China—paddy fields of tender green rice, streams, pools, canals, ditches, lakes innumerable—all alive with boats and gleaming against the red earth. For the feature that most distinguishes Central and Southern China from the Western world (excepting certain spots like Devonshire and parts of Alabama) is that the soil is not black or brown or buff or yellow or dust colour, but red—all shades of red, from a tawny near-orange to the deep purply-plum of the hills of middle Szechwan.

In the 'plane are mostly Chinese officials, already busy preparing to get under full swing at Chungking if the change has to be made. Many of them have studied abroad; nearly all speak some foreign language, with English predominating. A year before most of them were probably wearing Occidental clothes. But with the war and the rise of nationalism has come a return to the specifically Chinese. To-day a large number, perhaps the majority, of these somewhat westernized bureaucrats bear the ancient grey or blue robes of the traditional Chinese gentleman. The native pilot, smart in uniform and white cap, speaks twangy American, and (for which I am grateful) American, too, is the way in which he lifts his "bus" from the water and places it again with a splash on the cocoa-coloured reaches of the Yangtse at Kiangling and Ichang. Five minutes above Ichang the gorges begin. Under a low cloud ceiling, the hydro seems to be flying straight at a rock wall. As it approaches, a door becomes visible and the 'plane swings back and forth between fantastic cliffs, some sheer and smooth, others carved into pylons and stalagmites, with rocky walls behind them, in the crevices of which the patient Chinese have scraped out little terraces of earth and one sees new wheat rising within protecting walls. The 'plane flies level with the top of the cliffs; fifteen hundred feet below a sampan toils upstream, drawn painfully along one wall by two figures staggering forward on a crazy tow-path. The gorges widen only to narrow again. They continue for a couple of hundred miles. Then the rocks subside, cultivated fields appear everywhere, and after half an hour or

so a large town appears, perched well above the river at the end of a long bluff. Ichang means "Can Be Prosperous" and I sincerely hope it is. But when the 'plane alights again it is beside a city that bears the prophetic name of "Happy Again," a name probably given thousands of years ago by river travellers grateful at having finally surmounted those dreadful river gorges and being able to relax again at Chungking.

Situated on the Yangtse and divided into two parts by the Kialing River, the ancient walled city of Chungking is a unique mixture of old and new. From the river level I was carried up nearly three hundred steps in a sedan chair on long bamboo poles by two ninety-pound coolies. I might have walked; but this was the first opportunity in my life to ride into a city in a sedan chair and I did not intend to miss it. Entering the gate, one is struck by the long row of water carriers, the numerous monks, the vivid exotic crowd that swarms through the streets, shouting strange cries, chanting various sorts of wares, keeping time in those strange yet marvellous rhythmic coolie barks, thanks to which the greatest burdens can be carried along without a hitch by slim bodies moving in unison. A few wide streets cut motorways through a maze of narrow lanes.

Chungking was, before the war, the trading outlet for all Szechwan, and its stores are full of native drugs, thick plain-colour silks of excellent quality, offices for the exporters of wood-oil and products of Tibet. Several countries maintain consulates: there is an international club. It had eighty foreign members, but no ice even on a suffocating June day,

when a sort of moist dust clutched at the throat and the sweat stood unevaporated on the forehead.

Old and new are combined most discontentingly. The setting is traditional China; the wares in the shops are, except for the vast piles of Chinese medicines in the native pharmacies, mostly products not of the old handicrafts but of the new machine, Chinese or foreign. Somehow the city was symbolized in my eyes by the place where I slept. It was in the top floor of the Mei Feng Bank, a modern steel and concrete construction, with an electric elevator; on the floor of the bedroom was linoleum. But scattered throughout the vast chamber were no less than five spittoons, and the bed was Chinese in type, with the upper sheet sewn to a silken coverlet.

Yet the conflict between old and new in Chungking was definitely decided by three new factors. The first was the war. Chungking became properly patriotic. Its streets began to ring night and day to the tramping of countless soldiers and recruits. There were the famous wall propaganda pictures copied from the Russians; there were the cloth posters, with inspiring mottoes stretched above the streets; there were the myriad pictures of Chiang-Kai-shek and the few portraits of Sun Yat-sen; there were numerous organizations of all sorts helping to prepare, conduct or bear the war strain. There were ten or twenty thousand refugees, each with a tale to tell that made Chinese blood boil. And there was General Ho Kwo-kwang, the representative of what was called the National Government, to distinguish it from the Provincial Government at Chengtu, still further to the west. General Ho seemed

an army in himself: a loyal, quiet-voiced, intelligent soldier, striving patiently to increase the war effort wherever he could, and at the same time to prepare a gigantic economic development of rich Szechwan.

General Ho's principal task was, however, to receive and house several Governmental offices and departments and of preparing to receive the rest in case of the abandonment of Hankow.

Already the presence of these Government officials had overcome the traditional in Chungking. This was the second factor. Trained young economists from Oxford and Columbia, snappy bureaucrats used to the atmosphere of cosmopolitan Shanghai, were making a deep, if sometimes unwelcome, impact upon sleepy Szechwan.

Their efforts were seconded by the professors and students in exile. Chungking had its university—a small but impressive centre, specializing in science and engineering, directed by a German-trained Chinese engineer, standing ten miles outside the town on a bluff above the Han River. Then its campus was asked to shelter the Faculty and twelve hundred students of the crack Central University of Nanking, bombed out of existence by the Japanese last November. Seven other educational institutions were grouped around Chungking: obviously a factor of this type in a town of half a million must become irresistible, despite the grumblings of the old timers.

3. CHENGTU

Chengtu, fantastic Chengtu, to one Foreign Devil you will remain unforgettable, though he stayed

but a few days within your nine miles of forty-foot walls ! For you alone are the fabled China of Marco Polo. Where else do the inhabitants use their ancient defences for a public promenade on warm summer nights ? From where else in China but your citadel can one occasionally see the snow-clad giants of Tibetan Himalaya, fifty or a hundred miles distant across the "Red Plain ?"

Here is a province, the biggest in China proper, almost completely separated from the rest of the country by a mountain barrier—a province which looks as much west to Tibet and north to Mongolia as eastward to the sea. Here around this ancient capital of the one-time Kingdom of Shoo, lies a land—unique in China—that, despite its approximately sixty million population (some claim seventy) on a territory smaller than France, has never really known famine. For the fertile "Red Plain" produces two crops of cereals or four of vegetables every year, thanks to a marvellous system of irrigation that was set up by China's greatest hydraulic engineer, Li Ping, who lived, well, something over two thousand years ago. Outside the "Red Plain," in the triangle between the "Three Cities," are the salt domes, famous in a country where salt is still an article to be taxed, which may become an oil Golconda in some fairly near future. The mountains elsewhere are loaded with mineral wealth, including gold, awaiting the day when communications will make exploitation feasible. The forests toward the Himalaya foothills swarm with marvellous birds and almost equally marvellous animals—tigers and the lonely panda, that bamboo-eating pied brown

and white sub-bear, one of which I saw in captivity nuzzling into a hole it had dug for itself. Here in Szechwan the villages are often larger than well-known towns in other parts of the country. On its way from Chunking to Chengtu, the "paved" highway, whose two hundred and sixty miles can be driven by a bold chauffeur in not over two days, crosses the "Four Rivers" (the words "*Sze Chwan*" mean "Four Rivers"), and touches eight walled cities the one more medieval than the other.

As for Chengtu itself, it is a great city of six or seven hundred thousand people, with giant gates. Here, in famous Great Eastern Street, are shops selling superb silks and satins legendary throughout China, and marvellously gay embroideries made in shop fronts open to the world by weak-eyed little boys of ten; coppersmiths galore; curio dealers dispensing old jade carvings, ancient bronze mirrors and rare Tibetan jewellery for a song, since, as I was told, "nobody wants such old trash." Here are tiny Taoist temples right on the streets like shops, before one of which I saw a fine yellow paper dragon, ten feet long, newly put together for a coming celebration; here is a series of beautiful ancient constructions of varying style that now lead into Szechwan University; here the city gates must be closed at night to keep out bandits, and houses hide behind venerable walls; here nearly everybody drinks incredibly heady wine distilled from orange juice and any number of people poison themselves with opium. Yet, good or bad, Chengtu seems Old China and the machine age is still felt remotely as a knock on his door to an opium

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smoker—a call to reality, perhaps ultimately irresistible but which he can still ignore. Chengtu!

Yet I must not give a false impression. Externally this city is anything but an isolated centre of obscurantism. My hotel, the Sa Li Wen, not far from the park, had been built comfortably only twenty or thirty years ago; it possessed a couple of bathrooms, though no real toilets, with running water; there was a mosquito net over my bed and the Number One Boy spoke considerable English and served tomato soup out of a can opened less than three weeks before.

The city housed eleven foreign missions and two Bible societies. The Y.M.C.A. building seemed admirably administered and full of modern-appearing young men. There were many returned students from abroad. The Missionary West Union University had an art museum with Tibetan objects rivalling those in the British Museum or the Louvre. The National Chinese University was captained by two scholars who were almost contemporaries of the writer at the University of Michigan. There were new hospitals: I watched a soccer football match that drew several hundred spectators, and membership in the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides was said to be obligatory for school children. There were at least ten daily newspapers and a feminist weekly published by pretty Chu Zho-hwa, a most intelligent girl, trained in Japan. A modern brewery provided a very fair imitation Pilsener beer as an alternative to orange wine.

What was more, those rambling palaces, with their dozens of courtyards opening one out of the other, housed two very modern "Marshals,"

Yang Chi-yi, the Civil Governor, and Ten Chi-ho, the head of military affairs, who headed a thing called the Pacification Commission of Szechwan and Sikiang Provinces. In addition to captaining Szechwan's efforts in keeping eight divisions in the field against the Japanese, this administration had drawn a very impressive programme for the economic development of the province, on a scale that is absolutely astounding. There were a couple of agricultural and live stock breeding experimental stations of a really surprising efficiency. Who could insinuate that Chengtu was anything but modern? Even opium culture, the curse of Western China, had been severely restricted, one was told, and smoking was going out of fashion.

Yet how square all this modernity with the permanence of certain ancient institutions and abuses?

Opium culture might have been greatly restricted, but the traveller could see the poppy fields along the road but a few miles outside the city gates. Why was it that so many of the city shops were closed in the morning and only open after lunch? Could it be that their owners, having smoked until very late, only at lunch-time revived enough to smoke those other few pipes, thanks to which they recovered sufficient lucidity to transact the day's business? Why was it that the rickshaw boys sometimes stood dazed before a squawking motor-car, without moving, or, upon hearing an address, darted off in exactly the opposite direction? Foreigners resident in Szechwan declared that although there was some improvement among the young, opium smoking was the chief occupation of about half the town's adults

over thirty years of age and that a very large share of the provincial revenues came from the opium tax.

In other ways, too, what these foreigners reported was very interesting. What was the good of modern hospitals if contagious cases were hardly ever isolated, typhoid and influenza were endemic and there prevailed an epidemic of scarlet fever, "brought to the province by these beastly modern airplanes," as one Chinese physician, trained abroad, somewhat unscientifically remarked ?

The streets of Chengtu are wide, paved and reasonably clean. But at ten o'clock each evening the gates to the great forty-foot wall were firmly shut and none could have them opened by the guards without a special pass. The reasons ? Just bandits. Who were the bandits ? Either peasants, with a longing for higher things, or soldiers garrisoned nearby who might be tempted to profit by the darkness to enter and pillage a few insufficiently protected houses. A foreign diplomat living in a compound outside the north gate turned loose in his garden every evening some fifteen savage police dogs to frighten robbers. Visitors awaited within closed cars until the "dog coolies" chained them up. Besides, it was explained, if the city gates were not closed at night, part of the garrison within the walls might decide to desert. Foreigners and Chinese with money travelling around Chengtu found it convenient to go with an armed escort (just as they did in the neighbouring province of Yunnan), and a friendly Russian chauffeur proudly showed me his fully loaded Colt automatic, without which, he said, he never dared to go abroad after dark. Sometime

before my arrival, it was said in town, there had been an attempt upon the life of a missionary Bishop by a Chinese fanatic, who wanted to kill him with a knife "because he was a foreigner." A curious result of all the popular education and enlightenment, but, natural if one accepted the thesis that Szechwan was fundamentally medieval.

Szechwan was maintaining those eight divisions at the front all right, but many more than eight were garrisoned throughout the province. What were they doing here—so many hundreds of miles from the fighting line? Could it be that without them the present Administration could not maintain itself?

After the collapse of the Manchu Empire in 1911, this province became the bone of contention of three cliques: the Siuting, the Chengtu and the Chungking. Chungking won, and its leader, "Marshal" Liu Wan-hwei, remained boss until he was beaten by the Communists and then ousted with violence by his own nephew, "Marshal" Liu Siang, who exploited his conquest until the Japanese invasion. "Marshal" Liu had snapped his fingers at faraway Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking, but he knew the handwriting on the wall and immediately threw in his lot with the Chinese national armies. In the autumn of 1917 he obligingly died. The National Government, with the consent of the Province, sent the Pacification Commission of Szechwan and Sikiang Provinces with the two modern-minded "Marshals." But the Administration in Chengtu remained in the hands of the henchmen of dead "Marshal" Liu, and some said that the National Government governed here on condition of abstention from ruling.

Many foreigners believed that the real Szechwan rulers were at heart autonomists, if not separatists; that they were far more Szechwanese than Chinese in feeling, and determined to continue the age-old exploitation of the poor farmers by usury and taxation. For dear Old China can teach the most liberal modern spenders a trick or two; in Szechwan the taxes had already been collected for perhaps fifty years in advance, men said. New China might modify all this. . . .

The elements of New China were here, all right —the missionaries, the returned students, the *Kuomintang*, the reformers and mass education movement and Y.M.C.A. But one must perhaps come to Chengtu to realize just how deep is the dislike of traditional China for all these new-fangled innovations. One can understand the anger of the opium fiends under the threat of being deprived of their reason for existence. One can comprehend the resentment of any local political machine against efforts at reform or transfer of authority to a national Leader so competent and vigorous as Chiang Kai-shek. Even the dislike of the traditionally educated Chinese for the missionaries becomes clear if you imagine the reaction of Occidental *intelligentsia* to Chinese missionaries that came to teach such outlandish habits as the binding of girls' feet and the multiplication of the spittoon. But why do the old scholars so dislike the returned students? Clearly for much the same reason as the nationalist everywhere dislikes the expatriate. The traditionally educated Chinese is a conceited fellow. Without having much understanding of patriotism as we know it, he is, nonetheless, amazingly sure of him-

self, proud of his people's and of his personal culture. He hates the returned students from abroad because they are to him uneducated and traitors to Chinese traditions. He believes them uneducated because they have not mastered the language which remains the pride of the Mandarin; they know only a few thousand characters; they do not sing their speech in the proper manner of the ancestors, but bark it out almost like foreigners. And, above all, they have repudiated all that was ancient China: its science, medicine, engineering, architecture, manufacturing processes, art, in favour of crudely efficient foreign innovations. Left to the returned students, China, as the traditionalists understand and love it, would cease to be China, and Chengtu would no longer be Cathay.

4. KUNMING

Yunnan is the remotest province of China proper and borders on Burma, Tibet and French Indo-China. It is mountainous, relatively scarcely inhabited, and, in spite of its perfect climate, in parts almost unexplored even by the Chinese. In the time of the great Ming Dynasty, courtiers considered banishment to the frontiers of Yunnan almost the worst thing that could befall them. A fairly large section of the population is Mohammedan in faith and an even larger section are not true Chinese at all, but older races who bear the quaint names of Lolos, Miaos, Shans, Wahs, as well as other "shy peoples" one has to go a long way off the beaten track to hear of. From China, Yunnan Province was until recently almost as inaccessible as Szechwan and it is small

wonder that among the twelve million inhabitants' local feeling was stronger than national.

Recent history turned Yunnan into one of the most important sections of the country, destined perhaps to play an absolutely decisive role in coming events. It was through Yunnan that the ancient trail along which the Chinese have from forgotten times kept in touch with India, climbed over mountains and across rivers. It was from Hanoi, in Indo-China, that the French, a few decades ago, pushed a narrow-gauge, single-track railway and a highway right across their territory and then three hundred miles further through most difficult country to Kunming, the capital of the province. Yunnan thus became a sort of back double-door to China. Then with all the front doors, except Hong-Kong, blockaded by the Japanese Navy, with the possibility of Hong Kong being severed from China proper ever more likely, with the Chinese Army retiring even further into the west, the facts of the "French Railway" (possibly extended north into Szechwan), and the Burma road (rapidly being modernized for motor traffic), made of Yunnan one of the vital factors of the present Far Eastern political situation.

Still another thing contributed to pushing Yunnan to the front: the fact that the province contains one of the very few tin fields of the world, and the only one which escaped control by the monopolistic International Tin Committee. The tin production of Yunnan could be quadrupled. The French Railway cuts the tin district and the outlet for the tin mines seems assured under all circumstances. Yunnan, therefore, became the scene of a very pretty little

economic intrigue of the true imperialistic type. The centre, naturally, was the capital, Kunming.

Beautiful, well favoured city, six thousand five hundred feet above sea level, with a climate that outdoes California, close enough to its lake to enjoy the beauty, far away enough to avoid most of the mosquitoes, with its lovely West Mountain and its temples out in front, Kunming is as charming a place to forget the world in as one could well imagine. Many of the foreign colony found it too much for them: they imitated the easy going population in addiction to opium. A person who takes up opium smoking in New York or Paris or London is playing with fire in a literal sense, for opium smoking destroys, not so much the body as the character. But a foreigner who smokes in China, thereby adding foreign prestige to the vice that is responsible for at least half of the degradation of China, is committing an historical crime. He is like a man who consents to tipple with a dipsomaniac.

The fascination of the city, as of Chungking, lies in a curious combination of opposites. From the Chinese side Kunming represents an ancient and distinctly backward sort of life. But, on the other hand, this backward sort of Chinese can, if he wishes, be in daily contact with modern French civilization. The French Government supports a school and a hospital almost gratuitously here. There is a modern power plant, electric light, a mint and an arsenal. There are numerous predominantly French business men, including the agents of armament firms; French is the predominant foreign language of the province.

This strange marriage of the ancient Chinese and

the modern Gallic is evident in the Government Building—a luxurious palace, with rooms ceiled with real gold leaf, European furniture, and European style. It was nowhere better shown than at a dinner given by the Governor of the Province, General Long-Yun. Now, the writer attended many dinners as the guest of important Chinese officials: at Canton, at Hankow, at Chungking, at Chengtu. At practically none was there the slightest attempt at the Occidental. Those present wore Chinese robes or informal European clothes, as they saw fit, sat about round tables and served themselves from common dishes. The food was served in Chinese fashion, several dishes at a time constituting a course, each course being marked by the presentation of hot moist towels to wipe the lips and take the place of napkins. On January 24, 1938, there were, perhaps for the first time in several thousand years, no incense sticks or candy offered in Chinese homes to the Kitchen God, so that he should bring a favourable tale to the God of Heaven concerning his worshippers on earth. Worshippers of good food the Chinese were and remain, but the all dominant fact of war penury left them nothing to waste. Thanks to wartime restrictions, the number of dishes was generally kept down to thirty or forty. The only drink was rice wine, consumed hot in small cups (or in Szechwan, orange juice wine), the number of which could and sometimes did rise to forty, fifty and even more, for the Chinese possess a number of fascinating table games to encourage competition in drinking. At the end of the meal appeared the only dish of rice, followed by tea.

In Governor Long-yun's gay palace at Kunming

everything was different. The guests sat at a long table, Occidental fashion. They had napkins from the beginning. The drink was water and French wine of good quality. The menu was restricted to a scanty ten items, served one after the other, which I reproduce as they were scribbled in English for me on the back of a menu card, by a Chinese friend:

Bird's Nest and Egg Soup
Fried Rolled Fish
Roast Gitsong (a kind of delicious mushrooms)
Chicken Coined (cut into small pieces)
Pigeon Without Bones
Roast Second (Suckling ?) Pig
Peace (In Pieces ?) Cake
Fresh Fruits
Ice Cream
Coffee or Tea.

It was into this relatively happy marriage of Paris (or Hanoi) and Yunnan that the Japanese invasion of China came like a tempest with absolutely unpredictable consequences.

Yunnan Province co-operated militarily with Chiang Kai-shek in his wars against the Kwangsi Generals who became the *Generalissimo's* closest helpers. But Yunnan had been essentially self-governing. Although it had heeded Chiang's request to cut down the opium production and to raise the price of opium by Government monopoly, it had also maintained its own Foreign Office and currency. Suddenly it was asked to co-operate in the defence of China. Yunnan accepted as a matter of course.

The Army it first sent to "China," meaning the

front, the Sixtieth, under General Lu Han, was not very large: three divisions only with nine supplementary regiments. Preparations were, however, made for training two hundred thousand men and sending out a "New Army" of three more divisions. The first army was equipped by the Central Government. The reinforcements, if I understood correctly, were being entirely equipped in Yunnan itself by the French, who suddenly decided that it was to their advantage to see that the province contiguous to French Indo-China should not fall into the hands of the Japanese. The Yunnan troops fought well.

After the fall of Nanking, as the Japanese came closer to Hankow, numerous Government institutions, factories, offices, universities, academies, and military departments began to be transferred to Yunnan by order of the *Generalissimo*.

Kunming was making no pretence at social or political modernity, but its inhabitants were patriotic, particularly the younger ones and the *Kuomingtang* group. Nowhere could one hear more fiery speeches, more winged words of defiance directed against the Japanese; nowhere were the professions of loyalty to Chiang Kai-Shek louder. But the Yunnan people were patriotic, not in an Occidental but in a Chinese way. At bottom China remains a nation of Mandarins, whose greatest respect is for the word and whose approach to life is literary. To such a people the most convincing arguments are found, not in the insignificant realm of deeds but in the immortal wisdom preserved in ancient words. As a clinching argument that China was bound to win the current war, an educated gentleman in Kunming offered for

my consideration the following proverbs which he asked me to submit to the world as a convincing argument in favour of China's ultimate victory. According to my promise I give them just as he copied them out for me in English in his own excellent hand:

"*He is pointed at by thousands of people because of the fault he committed and he will die without illness.*" Note: This shows Japan is hated by the world because of her cruel invasion of China.

"*One who does more* (*many ?*) *unrighteous things will kill himself.*" Note: This also shows the example of Japan.

"*One who has got morality will get more help and one who has lost morality will get less help.*" Note: This shows why China has got help from the peoples of friendly nations.

"*One word of righteousness is heavier than nine incense pots.*" (The incense pot in the Chinese Temple is made of brass or stone which is very heavy and serves as a measurement of a weight a man can carry.) Note: This shows propaganda by writing and speaking to the world is very important and powerful.

Really, Mr. Mowrer, could anything be further removed from hard facts as exemplified in the successes of the realistic nations like Germany, Italy and Japan? A most unmodern, fantastic, truly pitiful example of the clinging to an outward belief in a moral basis for the world!

Quite so, dear reader. The Chinese show a most deplorable unwillingness to yield to their ancient habits of thought, even though it is being proven each day that what succeeds on this earth is the ethics of the jungle. Or doesn't it succeed?

V

THE AMAZING FAMILY OF SOONG

HISTORICAL movements sometimes produce leaders, but leaders have it in their power to make or mar the finest movements. History is thus neither the account of the sociological and economic development of masses, nor of the achievements of heroes. For it is both. A military genius like Hannibal fails without the support of a great people, while the Celtic tribes succumbed to Rome for lack of adequate leadership. China, in the early Twentieth Century, brought forth several quite extraordinary leaders. The amazing thing is that they were all members of one family. Three of them married into it, the other four were born there. Fifty or a hundred years after their deaths it may be possible to rank the members according to ability. To contemporaries, they all seemed able, though in different ways.

Sun Yat-sen, the Mazzini or the Jefferson of Modern China, founded the Chinese Republic in 1911, and gave it a doctrine, the "Three Principles," whose realization was to be the task of a single governing party, the *Tungmenhui*, which turned into the *Kuomintang*. Sun was a democrat with collectivist leanings. But incidentally, he inspired the one-party, totalitarian State of a type which was first installed by the Russian Bolsheviks and after them by those fascist plagiarists, Mussolini and Hitler. Sun

Yat-sen married Miss Soong Ching-ling, the second daughter of a hammock peddler who drifted to the United States from Hainan Island in the extreme south of China, and there joined the Fifth Street Methodist Episcopal Church South, of Wilmington, North Carolina, adding at baptism the names of a benefactor, Charles Jones, to his own family name of Soong. Later, he returned to China, married a Miss Ni, and helped found the Chinese *Y.M.C.A.*

One of Sun's disciples, a young officer who became his private secretary and remained with him until he died in 1923, was called Chiang Kai-Shek and became the George Washington of modern China. Active in the Chinese revolutions of 1911 and 1913; with, and then against, the Communists; associate of Russian Borodin and later of the worst "Tammany" elements who controlled the decadent *Kuomintang* of the late 'twenties; official founder of the Puritan New Life Movement intended to regenerate China; convert, like Charles Jones Soong, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; the soldier who knew no foreign countries but Japan and Soviet Russia proceeded to take charge of China from about 1927 on, and ultimately to lead the country in its great war of liberation and defence against Japanese aggression. On December 1, 1927, he married Soong Mei-ling, youngest daughter of the hammock peddler of Wilmington, North Carolina, and during all the eventful years that followed, she remained his closest and perhaps most inspiring helper.

Up in Shansi, there lived a merchant banker called H. H. Kung. He owned a string of tiny banks stretching right across Northern China from Manchuria to Mongolia, and some medicine shops in

South China as well. From this, he branched out into all sorts of other business. Though a staunch Christian speaking beautiful English, as a reputed lineal descendant of Confucius ("Master Kung" in Chinese) it was, perhaps, only natural that he should represent the more traditionally Chinese tendency in the nation struggling for rehabilitation. Oddly enough, his wife was Soong Ai-ling, eldest daughter of incredible Mr. Charles Jones Soong. Thanks to his wife's relations, Dr. Kung became Finance Minister and Prime Minister of China.

There were not only marriageable daughters in the Soong family. There were three sons. Like their father and their sisters, they studied in the United States and remained true to Methodism, the religion their father embraced in Wilmington, North Carolina. The two younger boys, T. A. and T. L., were intelligent. The oldest son, T. V., was remarkable. For he became one of China's richest bankers, a sound economist and competent financial administrator on Western lines, the personal friend of an entire group of notable people abroad, the champion of Occidentalism, a leader of Chinese youth in opposition to the Japanese, the strongest supporter and occasional opponent of *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek. T. V., as every one called him, became legendary; his mysterious comings and goings, his houses in several cities, his Bank of Canton, his missions, the many attempts upon his life, these were all whispered and commented, praised or attacked from one end of the country to another. He was not revered; he was admired or hated. Was he not the author of the 1931 plan of the revival of China

through a corps of League of Nations experts? Did not the foreign business men trust him beyond his Chinese fellows? Had he not at the same time excellent relations with Soviet Russia, along with his sister Madame Sun Yat-sen, and was he not China's link with such foreign bodies as the International Peace Campaign of Lord Robert Cecil? But loved or hated, criticized or admired, T. V. remained a huge figure, and after the *Generalissimo*, the most powerful personality in China.

Such then were the members of the amazing family of Soong, called upon by destiny to provide in its greatest crisis a nation of over four hundred millions with the leadership that could either make or break the country. Except dead Sun Yat-sen, I met them all.

It was at the Central Army headquarters at Wuchang, across the Yangtse River from Hankow, that I saw Chiang Kai-shek. The *Generalissimo* was kind enough to send a launch to take me the mile and a half across the turgid yellow water, and a waiting car whisked me in a few minutes into the courtyard of a great building. There were sentries about but no wealth of soldiery. Chiang Kai-shek dispensed with ceremony despite his semi-dictatorial position in a country in which the tradition of ceremony is deeply rooted. Alone among the members of what critics call sarcastically the "Soong Dynasty," the *Generalissimo* used an interpreter, in this case Hollington Tong, Vice-Minister of Publicity, faithful follower of the Soong family and author of the official biography of Chiang Kai-shek.

There was little conversation. I explained my visit to China and posed my questions. The

Generalissimo accompanied the translation of my remarks with a series of understanding grunts and answered in half a dozen words. During the translation, I studied that face and figure.

Most Chinese are quiet in manner and eschew facial expression. Chiang Kai-shek was inscrutable, a habit doubtless acquired in the labyrinth of plot and counterplot that used to constitute Chinese politics. No poker player ever kept a closer mask. His head was closely shaved on the Russian or German model, accentuating his hollow temples. His thin lips barely moved as he uttered his polite grunts. As a conversation, the interview was not a great success. He was obviously used to receiving foreign newspaper men; used and resigned and anything but communicative.

Yet I could not imagine that face trusting too much to any human being, although it obviously welcomed approval. A paradoxical character, so I judged. Limitlessly ambitious, yet not precisely self-seeking. Really caring for principles, really believing that he was leading China through the "period of tutelage" prescribed by Sun Yat-sen toward "democracy," while at the same time furthering and organizing private and secret societies that foreigners were bound to call Fascist in character. Watching him, I understood the subtle politician who stood by and watched the heroic Nineteenth Route Army massacred by the Japanese at Shanghai in 1932 rather than engage prematurely in a death struggle with Japan, yet who, less than two years later, was giving secret lectures to the Officers' Training Corps at Kuling, on the urgency and manner of preparing for the coming war with arrogant Nippon. Endlessly proud, willing to die

rather than submit to the conditions of his 1936 kidnappers, yet voluntarily fulfilling their demands when released and scrupulously observing the unwritten pact with his former communist enemies. Doubtless as "boundlessly vindictive" as his opponents said, perhaps cruel, yet capable of the greatest generosity and kindness. Utterly patriotic, self sacrificing, immediately ready to die for China, yet somehow unable to divorce China's cause from his own eminence. Insensitive to popular suffering, socially obtuse, despite the New Life Movement with its emphasis on toothbrushes for which he accepted the responsibility. Above all, a leader, simple in intellect, subtle in intuition, swift in action beyond his fellow Chinese, therefore their proper choice and their idol at a time of crisis. However devious and ultra-oriental, however oblivious to foreign experts' advice, this man seemed to follow an instinct of his own that might, in last analysis, prove more effective in dealing with the human material at his disposal than any amount of "military science". I left Wuchang with confidence in Chiang Kai-shek's ability.

What a contrast with Soong Mei-ling, known to foreigners in Hankow simply as "Madame!"

The wife of the *Generalissimo* received me in the reception rooms of the Central Bank of China at Hankow. She had just come from Wuchang; she was going to address a meeting of feminist leaders on the new tasks of Chinese womanhood during the war. Like many Chinese women, though to an even higher degree, she had, in her simple Chinese gown, the gift of permanent elegance—slim in appearance, brisk in manner and speech. Sex appeal. Quick feminine

intelligence a little eclipsed at moments by the feeling she must live up to her role as the wife of the hero.

She told me of China's struggle in a simple and moving way. She could not, she explained, accept any of the numerous invitations to return to the United States where she had studied, for the calls upon her would prove too much for her health. Besides, she had far more than she could do within China. Just think, in another year, thanks to the war and the Japanese naval blockade, the Chinese women would have nothing fit to put on their backs! Shantung, the great silk-producing province, practically all of the cotton growing and textile manufacturing regions, were overrun by the enemy. Therefore, she was obtaining hand looms for refugee women on which to weave cotton stuffs of the simplest kind. Imagine a whole society of Chinese women clad in homespun!

Japan, she said, was anxious to prevent the development of Chinese industry, for Chinese labour was even cheaper than Japanese. Already cheap articles manufactured for Japanese in China had been sold abroad under the label, *Made in Japan*. She and her friends were trying to substitute China-made cheap toys on the world markets for those Japan used to export. Perhaps something of the same kind could be done with the remaining silk.

Her eyes flashed as she referred to the Japanese treatment of Chinese civilians, especially the women, and the Japanese manufacture and sale of narcotics to the Chinese and even to Americans.

Then the usual question: since Americans were friendly to China, why did they persist in selling to Japan airplanes, bombs, and war material for

murdering the Chinese population, a question doubly embarrassing coming from so attractive a woman. I did not know the answer, unless it was that American isolationists utterly lacked imagination while some American pacifists were quite incalculably pro-Japanese and pro-German. The Administration. . . .

But she knew all about that and expressed her deep appreciation of what President Roosevelt was "saying" in defence of China. If only he would "do" something. China lacked credit even to purchase food for civilians.

Sometimes she lapsed for a phrase or two into stereotyped propaganda: China was fighting the battle of democracy everywhere; if China were beaten, the rest of the world, even America, would pay a bloody price; and the like. I agreed with her fully but was sorry she did not give me credit for understanding as much. Yet for the most part, she spoke as an intelligent, even witty woman. But her time was fearfully taken up and there was that speech to be made. . . .

While we were talking, her eldest sister, Madame Kung, the wife of the Prime Minister, came into the room.

Less strikingly pretty than her youngest sister, Soong Ai-ling was equally impressive. There was about her anything but tall figure something so authoritative, so personally powerful, so penetratingly keen, that one would have been struck with her anywhere. Here was authority, conscious of itself, conscious of power, but withal wonderfully good-natured, resourceful, helpful in need. Madame Kung avoided answering questions: she spoke of her

very agreeable trip to Europe a few years before, of our mutual acquaintances to whom she sent her regards, and of whom she seemed to preserve memories of unusual intensity. I suspected a mind that forgot nothing and forgave little, but that knew how to repay affection richly. I should have liked to see more of her.

With her husband, the Prime Minister, I was more fortunate. Dr. Kung received me in those same rooms of the Central Bank of China, gave me an interview, served tea with delicious persimmon cakes, and talked long and fluently in English about Chinese finances. He was optimistic: he did not announce or predict the new drop in the value of the Chinese dollar that occurred a few weeks later. . . . I did not ask him if it was true that he did not see eye to eye in financial matters with his brother-in-law, T. V. Soong, whom he apparently considered something of a Radical. He ate nothing, but his conversation and his manner were vigorous and he personally revised the text of the interview I later submitted. As I wrote at the time, in the rather plump elegance of his grey silken robe, he looked the merchant prince he was or some ancient Chinese philosopher, and I found it easy to accept the story that the man before me descended directly from the great Confucius, a generally accepted belief that added greatly to his prestige among the Chinese. But I could not accept the story reported to me by several persons that his more important thinking was done for him by Madame Kung. Dr. Kung's ideas were far too incisive to be the product of any one's brain but his own, not even of his wife, the gifted Ai-ling. As an assistant, I could imagine her, perhaps as an instigator

and counsellor. What women elsewhere would not try to assist and influence their husbands in such a position at a moment of such national crisis? A well known China expert wrote of the three Soong girls that they were of a "retiring disposition" in the sense that they "preferred to act through their husbands when they could." For whatever the future of the country, the China of Chiang Kai-shek and the Soongs was undergoing its trial by fire and the fortunes of the entire family were at stake.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek had as permanent assistant and adviser, W. H. Donald, the well-known Australian expert on China, in whose company I was privileged to spend one of the most intellectually profitable and agreeable days of my life.

Madame Sun Yat-sen habitually mixed up in all sorts of movements and continually turned out political writings. Her I met in Hong Kong, in a flat high up on the Peak overlooking the harbour. After a brief argument with a servant at the door who apparently had not been informed of my coming and who was suspicious of visitors, I was shown into a bare room furnished in the Occidental fashion with a small desk, a small table and a couple of chairs. A little surprised, for I had been announced by her famous brother, T. V. Soong himself, I waited.

Soong Ching-ling, the widow of China's great founder, combined the charm of her sister Mei-ling and the determination of her other sister Ai-ling. In addition, on that day she showed signs of political fanaticism.

She served me something to drink but took nothing herself, with the air of one who had no time for

frivolities. She talked with quiet passion of the principles of her late husband, dead fifteen years but as alive in her breast as ever. She told me of her numerous activities. Alone among the three Soong sisters she seemed more European than American. She snorted at mention of the New Life Movement. Knowing of her dissension with Chiang Kai-shek, I asked no further questions on that subject. For hers was a passionately intolerant faith. I did not then know that she was a prominent member of the China Defence League, which was providing assistance to the former communist Eighth Route Army in Northern Shensi. She asked me questions concerning Soviet Russia, and my inability to approve of the massacres of Old Bolsheviks reputed traitors was obviously not to her way of thinking. She herself spoke so sympathetically of the Soviets that I asked her point-blank if she were a Communist, a question she did not deign to answer. All in all, not a very harmonious meeting, but of the highest interest to me. For here was a soul of crystal transparence burning literally with the "hard gem-like flame" Walter Pater so recommended. When I left she relented a little and presented me with a pamphlet wherein she had transcribed her belief that China could not be conquered, though just how or why she did not explain. After all, argument was not her role. . . .

To meet T. V. Soong was either easy or quite impossible, for he came and went like the wind in the night and none but his most intimate retainers and relations and associates were ever informed in advance. After all, he had been the object of any number of unsuccessful attacks and I could not be

surprised that he once failed to tell me in advance that we would be travelling on the same train from Hong Kong to Canton although I had seen him but a few hours previously. The trains on this line were bombed often enough without the Japanese naval flyers realizing that this particular train was carrying their arch-enemy T. V.; for, after the *Generalissimo*, there was none, I imagine, whom the invaders so hated.

My first meeting with him was in the Hong Kong Office of the Bank of Canton. After I had, with difficulty, made my way through a roomful of persons even my foreign eye recognized as a Chinese bodyguard, and waited for a moment in a very plain office, I was ushered into the sanctum of a man reputed to be the richest in China. Behind a desk, in his shirt sleeves, a revolver in a holster on his left hip, was a heavy figure, six feet tall, whose manner was at the same time boyish, diffident, and rude. Making all allowances for the terrible war strain, the importance of his work and his distinction, though I saw him several times, I never became used to his rudeness. At Hankow he invited me to dinner, and when, out of courtesy to him, I broke a previous engagement with an American friend who had asked other people to meet me, and went, he abruptly dismissed me as soon as the meal was over. But I became more and more conscious of T. V.'s qualities. His very bulk was inspiring.

"How do you keep so slim?" he once asked me with a touch of envy; "now I eat almost nothing and look at me!"

To China in distress, burly T. V. was a rock. At bottom as Chinese as Chiang Kai-shek himself, T. V.

nonetheless managed to achieve a unique reputation among foreigners as a man of immense capacity, absolute reliability, and complete honesty. If any one could secure foreign help for China, it was this burly son of the hammock peddler. It was precisely the qualities that endeared him to Westerners with ideas of efficiency that made him so obnoxious to many of his elder countrymen who accused him virtually of trying to sell out China to "foreign devils." With his brother-in-law Chiang he had differed, rumour said, over questions of a balanced budget and orderly finances. But I suspected a deeper ground and wondered if there were place even in China for two such ambitions.

T. V.'s strength was with the returned students, the social-minded leaders, the pro-Russians and the youth. Though older men in China suspected while respecting him, young Chinese everywhere positively thrilled when they heard that I knew and liked T. V. For the old fellows seemed to be dreaming of a China freed from the Japanese menace that would nonetheless preserve the ancient financial tyrannies (which were of a type that no free Occidental country would have tolerated for twenty-four hours). Young China was consciously striving for the integral application of all three of Sun Yat-sen's principles, number three, the livelihood (prosperity) of the people being as important as nationalism and democracy. In this particular it was looking for leadership less to the *Generalissimo* than to millionaire T. V. Soong. But Young China was still a minority, and during the war against the Japanese all lesser differences were in abeyance.

VI

ALONG THE YELLOW RIVER

1. I DID NOT GET TO LANFENG

BEFORE trying to estimate China's chance of successful resistance I wanted to see for myself how China was fighting. The Ministry of Publicity was obliging and suggested that the "East Front" over beyond Kuling would be a nice quiet object of excursion as nothing much was at the time going on there. Perversely I insisted on going to the "North Front" along the Yellow River, where a Japanese advance was in full progress. A pass signed by the *Generalissimo* himself was forthcoming, along with an interpreter who had spent some time at the University of California. But the Chinese are close-mouthed with foreigners, however well disposed, and they failed to inform me that the High Command had determined to avoid further battle on the flat country by effecting what Madame Chiang Kai-shek preferred to call "another strategic withdrawal" and that the firing line was moving rapidly toward the west.

Another foreign newspaper man completed the party and, with a fair supply of provisions and bedding for sleeping out, we left Hankow early one hot June day on the Number One express train of the Pinghan railway, bound for Chengchow, the important junction where the north-south railway cuts the east-west or Lunghai line.

A hundred miles or so north of Hankow the Chinese "devastated regions" began. Hardly a village or a town but had been smashed from the air. Some of the places were half in ruins. Air attacks were occurring almost daily, less, as we came to see from studying the targets chosen by the airmen, in view of inflicting military damage on China than as part of a general attempt to terrorize the Chinese. And precisely as in ravaged Spain, the effort was producing the contrary effect.

Civil life can of course be completely disrupted by frequent air attacks. But a fairly large section of the population simply leaves the place. This is rather an alleviation to the defenders than otherwise. In open country an intelligent person can by strict observation of approaching airplanes escape injury by bombs unless the attackers are too low or too numerous. Since the airmen never can be quite sure of the absence of anti-aircraft or machine-guns, they generally keep many thousand feet above the ground. Their terrific speed forces them to drop their bombs several hundred yards ahead of the target. This leaves the intended victims several seconds in which to seek safety. By plotting the course of the airplane in advance (and the pilot cannot veer quickly at such high speeds) the man on the ground can gain time to run twenty or thirty steps to the safer side, and by throwing himself face downward on the ground, almost surely escape death or serious injury. Naturally the quick-witted Chinese learned this at an early stage.

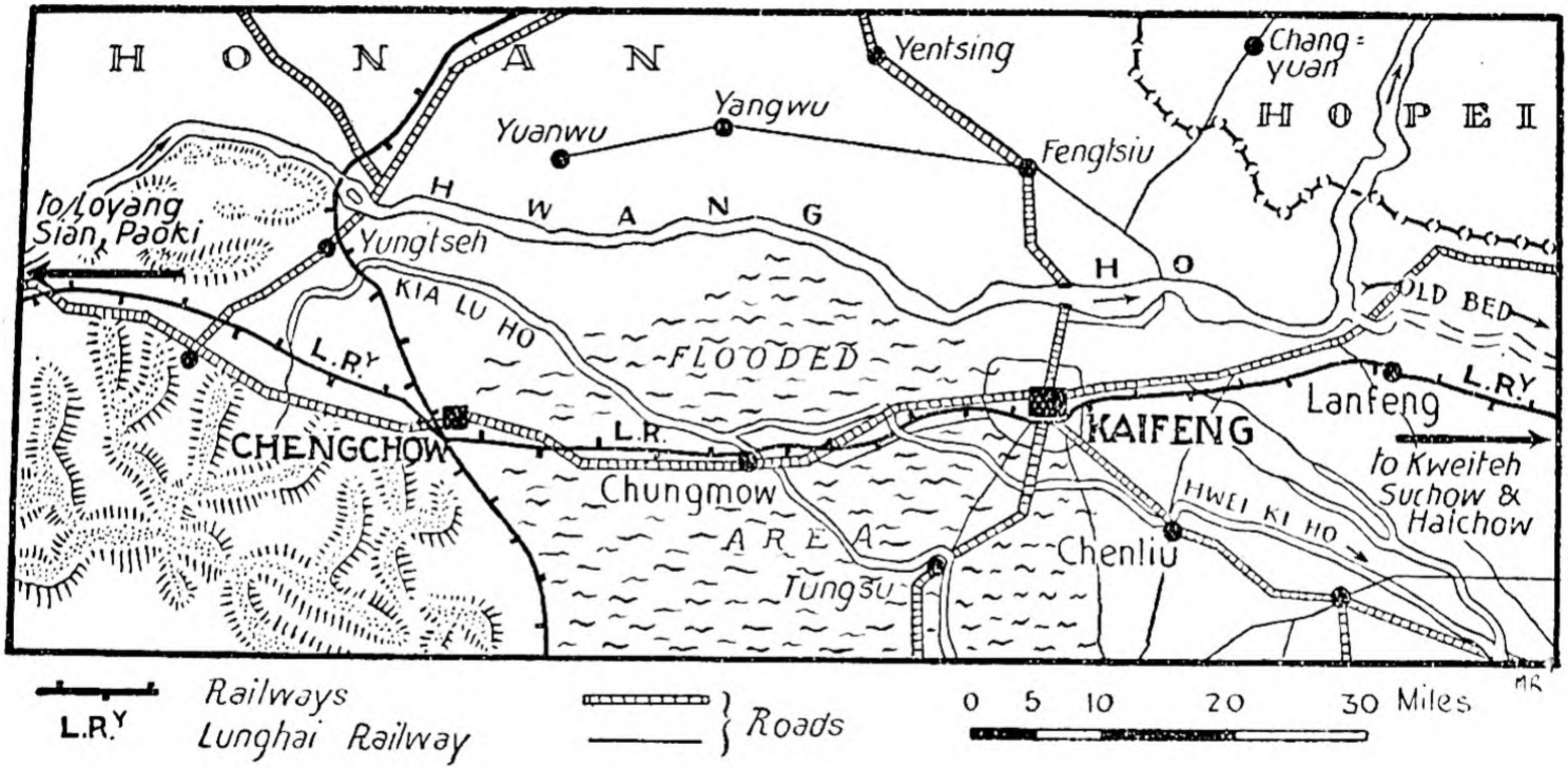
When a train was attacked, the scene was different. I twice witnessed the following: at the alarm signal

the train stopped where it was, the valuable locomotive was uncoupled and run a quarter of a mile up the track where, standing alone, it provided a very small target, while passengers and train crew left the cars and rushed into the nearby fields. There half hidden in the growing crops or flat on their bellies in the narrow runways between the wet paddy fields of rice, or crouched invisible under a hedge or tree, they completely escaped destruction, for the aviators aimed their bombs at the standing cars. To escape this trains actually within the war zone practically travelled only at night. The Japanese airmen showed small inclination for night flying.

In the towns close to the fighting, where air raids were incessant, the people were even cannier. Each day at sunrise the bulk of the population left the built-over area for the safety of the fields. While the sun remained above the horizon shops and houses were closed and empty. But at dusk the people crept back to their homes and did the necessary buying and selling by the light of faint tapers and dingy lanterns flickering through the darkness.

For the same reason Chinese headquarters, even the highest, were usually located in tiny villages outside the larger places, and raids by suspicious airmen would be answered by complete silence even though the surroundings were bristling with anti-aircraft guns and the low-flying Japanese could perhaps have been brought down with a machine-gun.

The trip to Chengchow took the scheduled eighteen hours for about three hundred miles, the train arriving on time. Chengchow itself, though perhaps the oldest and most historic town in all China and the



ALONG THE YELLOW RIVER

first big centre of the "Sons of Han" when they descended on to the Chinese lowlands from Turkestan or Mongolia, is a dull sordid place with few monuments of any particular interest. It was being heavily bombed and a large part of the population had left. All the foreign Missions in town had been more or less damaged by bombing, some of which was clearly intentional. The Italian Catholics and the American Methodists came off worst, their churches being completely shattered. Twelve bombs had also fallen into the American Baptist Hospital compound. But although it had been necessary to transfer the sick to the open country, the buildings had thus far escaped.

Our goal was the town of Lanfeng, some seventy miles to the east of Chengchow, where fighting had been heavy. A rash division of Japanese, commanded by the famous General Doihara, had actually come beyond the Chinese in Lanfeng, only to be attacked by other troops and pushed northward until they came to bay with the Yellow River behind them, and the Chinese yapping about them on three sides. An attempt to open a line behind them by a bridge of boats was thwarted by the Chinese aviation which destroyed the bridge. The question was whether the Chinese could deliver the punch that would annihilate the weak forces of Doihara before they could be relieved by two Japanese relief columns advancing westward along the railway beyond Lanfeng, just south of the Yellow River, the one astride the Lunghai Railway, the other a few miles to the south. They were weak columns, presumably some five regiments in all, or twelve thousand bayonets. Opposing them were six or perhaps nine Chinese

divisions, or well over fifty thousand men. But whereas the Japs were all steel, and motor or horse mounted, with the latest equipment, armoured trucks, artillery to spare and great superiority in the air, the Chinese had relatively little of all these things. Moreover, memories of the early days of the war, when poorly armed Chinese charged entrenched well-protected enemies only to be massacred, had produced a sometimes excessive caution in the Chinese leaders that was causing them to recoil before forces weak enough to be annihilated by Chinese numbers.

Strong in my mind was the impression, based on vivid memories of the World War, that somewhere or other there must be a fighting "front" and that it was my business to get there. At the very least I ought to reach Lanfeng and witness the action against the "encircled" Doihara Division. Kweiteh, the next big town beyond Lanfeng, had fallen to the Japanese with twenty precious Chinese locomotives as booty. In addition to the eighty lost at Hsuchow a couple of weeks previously that meant a loss of at least a hundred. There still seemed to be no cause for real worry, since the Chinese claimed to be holding Minchuan well beyond Lanfeng and to have a whole "army" (an indefinite word meaning anything from two to a dozen divisions) at Pochow to the south-east. But if we did not move quickly we thought we might miss the next fight.

Railroad stations along the Lunghai Railway, China's great east-to-west highway, had been badly damaged and the officials were living in bomb proof cellars dug in the yellow loess or clay-like "dust of ages" that from time immemorial has been blowing

eastward from the great arid plains of Central Asia, filling the water courses and driving the great Yellow River from one bed to another like a homeless outcast. To keep it in its latest course, the inhabitants have built high above the plain dykes, thanks to which the river, scarce of water save after heavy rain or in August when the melting flood from the mighty snows of the Himalayas reaches the plain, meanders along above the cultivated plains on either side. On these dark yellow flats grows a pale green pastel-like vegetation, trees, bushes and crops. The soil is fertile. In dry weather the strong winds whip it up into choking, blinding dust storms. Caught in one such, in Chengchow, we were hardly able to breathe or speak, while for hours our eyes stung with the swift driven filth. On the other hand, when it rains, the worn hard tracks called roads (there is no real pavement) become slippery glue upon which walking is a trial.

The loss of the locomotives had made the Chinese cautious. There was no guarantee of getting to Lanfeng by rail. The best we could do was to entrain for Kaifeng, the capital of Honan Province, two thirds of the distance to our goal. We arrived late one night and found shelter about three in the morning with two shocked women missionaries in charge of the American Baptist Mission outside the walls. They were accustomed to scorn shelter and witness air raids from the totally unprotected roof of their main building. But they shrank from the scandal of sheltering three strange men under the same roof. To relieve their sense of outraged decency, after breakfast we transferred to the main Baptist Centre

within the walls and in charge of a man. He had sent his family away, his furniture was crowded into one locked room for protection against pillaging Japanese. But like all the foreign missionaries he had decided to risk his life and stay behind to be faithful to his life work. As one of our two women hosts said:

"We have thought it all over and we just can't go; that would be yellow."

Meanwhile Kaifeng was in the same condition as Chengchow. Business life was at a complete standstill and much of the population had departed. Here, too, the foreign missions, with their churches and mission buildings and schools, were the favourite targets of the Japanese. The larger the flag painted on the roof as protection, the easier the building was to hit. The Canadian Episcopal cathedral, sheltering two priceless bronze tablets of ancient Chinese Jewry, had been ruined by a single giant bomb. The Japanese had long since lost their fear, if they ever had any, that either the United States or Great Britain would seriously do anything to compel respect for life and property.

For the rest, the repeated bombings were almost as successfully murderous as those witnessed at Canton. From the garden of the Baptist Centre in Kaifeng I watched a particularly brutal attack. A little nervous for the 'planes passed almost over us, yet determined to see and photograph, we stood out and watched six Japanese aircraft in two formations of three, fly first over the city from east to west and then return, at each passage dropping a number of hundred pound bombs of the kind considered less harmful. At one instant I saw six falling from a single 'plane, one under the other like a string of beads.

They missed us by nearly a quarter of a mile. While the murderers roared away into the east, we hurried to the stricken area near the East Gate. The bombs had fallen into the poorest quarter where the coolies were nearly all absent or at work. The number of women and children killed and maimed was nearly a hundred. I counted several bodiless heads of babies. From piles of rubble came faint groans. A woman sat speechless beside the prostrate figure of her dead husband, in her arms a baby missing from the waist down. The Japanese airplanes that did the killing were manufactured in the United States.

The operations on the "Northern Front" were in charge of the famous "Kwangsi general," Li Tsung-jen. Under him, in charge of our area, was General Cheng Sheng, the Yellow River Defence commander. We had a letter to the latter but missed him. At Chengchow they declared him to be in Kaifeng. At Kaifeng a sourfaced transport officer announced that the general had returned to Chenchow, apparently crossing us on the way. More than that he refused to say. In fact, he refused all information, declared solemnly there was no real military authority about, and categorically refused to help us reach Lanfeng. A new divisional general, who blew in to disprove the former statement, was equally unresponsive and, for China, downright impolite. This went on for three quarters of an hour. Finally I announced that as newspaper correspondent I had flown some ten thousand miles at fabulous cost to see China at war; and having come so near the front, I was not going back before making at least one attempt, with or without permission. Whereupon the transport

officer melted. He had, he admitted, intended to make matters difficult for us simply because the news was so unpleasant: China was again on the retreat. But we could, if we insisted and could find some means of getting there, go to the Headquarters of General Hsueh-yo, three miles out in the country.

He named the spot. We walked. General Hsueh and a young officer on his staff who had studied in the American Staff College at Fort Leavenworth were courtesy itself, but they advised against our going to Lanfeng. In reply to queries they refused to give any explanations. Yet at the same time, the General said, though he would take no responsibility for our going, our passes with the signature of the *Generalissimo* were good for the area in question and none would stop us if we insisted.

I did insist. I had been warned by my newspaper colleagues at Hankow about the reluctance of the Chinese to allow foreign journalists actually to witness any fighting, which it was my aim to do. I would therefore consent, I said, to wait until the next morning to see how matters developed; then, without some better reason for desisting I would insist on setting out for Lanfeng.

Here the interpreter revolted. I knew nothing of Chinese ways, he said. The reluctance of General Hsueh-yo could only mean, in his eyes, that the Chinese were falling back. There were rumours of the precipitate evacuation of the entire area. So much the more reason for advancing, I urged. We should not need to go so far in order to see something, at least a glimpse of the Chinese operations against the Doihara Division. How go? he countered.

There were probably no trains. He for his part urged a return to Chengchow and a talk with the Yellow River Defence Commander before we decided on anything rash. But at this point two indignant newspaper men refused to give way. After all there must be some means of getting forward. . . .

The next morning, after witnessing a massacre of Chinese women and children by Japanese bombers, we learned at the railway station that trains were no longer running to Lanfeng. It looked pretty hopeless. Twenty-five miles seemed too far to walk in the rain that had set in the night before. The interpreter took heart. Would we not consent to return to Chengchow ?

And then Chen appeared. Straight, slight, dressed in a neat khaki officer's uniform without insignia, an immense steel helmet above his smiling face, Chen Chen-sze introduced himself as a Chinese newspaper man on his way to Lanfeng. He himself had reason to believe motor transport could be found. Would we perhaps go with him ?

Would we not ! From the first minute I liked Chen. We piled into the rickety motor trucks and towards five in the afternoon set out for the east, where all through the day we had heard the rumble of distant guns. The "surrounded" Doihara Division were catching it hot.

As we bumped along over the worst road I have ever known, bouncing high off our seats and lurching against the sides, we met what seemed to be the entire population of the neighbouring villages pouring westward. In rickshaws, heavy ox-carts with solid wooden wheels, wheel-barrows; walking, riding

occasionally on donkeys or mules, the people were moving out of the way of the coming Japanese. The sight was not reassuring. But once we reached Lanfeng we would be with the garrison and enjoy the relative protection afforded by a large body of troops.

At Chingling, a station nearly half way, we picked up the sacks of rice that were to be our cargo and then the next disappointment occurred: the captain of the motor column announced he had received orders to return at once to Kaifeng: he could not go on to Lanfeng, the bridges had all been blown up that afternoon. We could either return with him or take a train that stood puffing at the platform pointing in the direction from which we had just come. We demurred. We raised our voices.

Whereupon Chen in his soft voice and negligible English:

"You go Lanfeng walk?"

"Yes," we almost shouted.

"I go Lanfeng." Then, in Chinese, he explained that there was a division headquarters a couple of miles away where we could spend the night, with only a fifteen miles walk to Lanfeng the following day. This was made clear to us and we accepted. But here the interpreter rebelled. He did not, he explained, much mind being killed by Japanese airmen. But there were constant infiltrations of Japanese cavalry and he refused to fall into the hands of Japanese raiders and be tortured to death. He would therefore return to Hankow. Before we could even answer, he swung himself on the now moving train and left us standing in the darkness with Chen and

his coolie, friendly soul but with whom we could exchange none but the most primitive of thoughts. It was a new sensation.

Six persons, and not four, set out from Chingling. From somewhere, perhaps from the disappearing train, had appeared two more Chinese, a blue-clad student propagandist going out to strew demoralizing handbills in the path of the advancing Japanese, and the propagandist's coolie. The two coolies obligingly added our food and bedding to the large bundles already hanging from their long bamboo poles. Under Chen's guidance, for he possessed a hand-drawn chart of the region which he frequently consulted, we walked southward, headed toward a military headquarters at which to pass the night before going on to Lanfeng the following day. The presumed location was a village called Kotien. But as any real conversation between foreigners and Chinese proved impossible owing to absence of a common language, there was nothing for the two newspaper men to do but walk and see.

Ten miles away, up by the Yellow River, sleepy Chinese cannon growled about the Japanese Doihara Division.

For hours we trudged across the dark muddy plain, we in heavy leather, the educated Chinese in tiny cloth slippers, the two coolies barefoot. The warm drizzle increased to a steady rain. The loess ruts, slippery as snow tracks, became unseen puddles in and out of which our wet feet went with a noisy splash. Chen's map seemed to have been drawn by someone careless of exact scale. There was some difficulty in finding the place, though obviously the

name Kotien awakened something familiar in the ever scarcer villagers who responded at great length with what we could only suppose were new and extremely complicated instructions how to get there.

Suddenly, with a sharp hiss that petrified the Chinese and caused even us to stop dead in our tracks, Chen froze and pointed to something. Approaching from the east, and diagonal to our path along what seemed to be a road, a tiny light no bigger than an oil lamp was moving. It came closer, three hundred, a hundred and fifty yards away. Then it turned to a pale beam and died away to nothing.

Softly Chen approached me. "Motor-car ?" he queried.

"Of course, motor-car," I answered and nodded.

"You hear ? he persisted.

"Hear what ?"

"Hear motor-car ?"

"No hear," I answered, suddenly wondering that I had not before noticed how that now invisible something had moved along without a sound.

"No hear motor-car ?" Chen whispered persistently.

I shook my head.

"Then Japanese," Chen announced with finality. "Japanese motor-car."

We stood paralysed. What would happen next, I caught myself wondering, while I softly wiped the rain and sweat from my bare head. The answer came at once. Out of the darkness a luminous beam suddenly blazed like a lighthouse straight at us. Automatically we dropped on our bellies into the wet road behind a thin curtain of bushes and sure we had

been seen, awaited the expected rattle of machine-guns. My nose nuzzled the wet earth.

Nothing happened. Apparently the man behind the light had overlooked six figures in a field, for the beam shifted again, raking the low bushes as though suspecting our presence but unable to find us.

The minute the light was off us Chen had me by the hand and, bent double, dashing from bush to bush, we ran from that light like scared rabbits. Three hundred yards ahead we pulled up and drew breath.

"Japanese motor-car," Chen said with a Chinese laugh and again began discussing directions with the student propagandist.

But this was Chinese territory. How could the Japanese simply have come along a main highway through the lines even at night without meeting any resistance ?

"He's right," my colleague suddenly volunteered. "I remember now at Shanghai the Jap armoured trucks moved about silently. The sooner we get somewhere away from here the happier I shall be. Forgetting what they would do to the Chinese, what a fine place this field would be for an international 'accident' on a nice dark night like this !"

"But if they just come through the front like that there can't be any Chinese army."

"There's an army somewhere all right but you might as well understand here and now, there isn't any front. Chinese and Japanese just go where they please. This is a free war." It was my turn to laugh.

For half an hour more Chen led us forward on his little cloth shoes through the mud, the student and the barefooted coolies at his heels. More noisily

we followed. Then a shape appeared out of the darkness and rapidly turned into a huge gate in an ancient wall.

"Kotien."

A funny sort of headquarters; inside it was as black as without; where was the Chinese army? Abruptly there was a faint noise near us. Chen's flashlight picked up a man, and he called out reassuringly. With a scream, the figure fled; running in a zigzag it reached the dark gate behind us and disappeared. A funny sort of headquarters, indeed. For a good quarter of an hour we stood behind a bush and waited while the barefoot coolies, having laid down their heavy loads, crept forward to scout. Finally they reappeared with an aged Chinese peasant. More endless conversation. So far as I could gather, he explained that the Chinese had all gone and the villagers with them leaving behind only him and the screaming coolie who had taken us for the expected Japanese.

There was no time to be lost: quickly we sneaked out through the gate and again suddenly stopped. This time I felt my heart thumping. Over to the east the searchlight was still fingering the landscape in our direction. But straight ahead, between us and Ching-ling station, other new lights were gradually moving westward. In that direction, too, we were cut off. So as fast as we could, we made off in the direction that seemed open, namely toward the south-west. After a long time slipping and splashing through the rain, we reached another tiny village. A timid Chinese in a hut responded to a gentle call and then guided us to a large walled farm. Two figures

moved swiftly toward us. Chen flashed his light full on himself, on the military button serving instead of regular insignia, and spoke to them. After a moment they seemed satisfied as to his identity and let him in alone, while we waited. When he returned, we saw by his flashlight that the two figures were soldiers holding hand grenades. Reluctantly they drew aside and let us into the abandoned farmhouse.

We spent the night there. The runaway owner must have been prosperous, for there was a big inner courtyard, with a principal dwelling behind and side-houses for extra women and servants. We took possession of one of these side-houses; silk things lay on a table, there was a family altar, and we slept on a matting-covered bed, too tired to mind the fleas, after a glorious supper of cold corned beef, canned fruit and noodles hastily boiled by the coolies over a wet out-door oven.

By five o'clock the next morning we were up, but it was seven before we had had our tea, finished off the evening's scraps for breakfast and once more started toward Lanfeng. The Japanese armoured truck had gone, but at every village we made inquiries, for safety lay in reaching a good-sized body of Chinese troops. An hour's walk to the east, and we were suddenly in the midst of hundreds of soldiers. There, in the middle of a village called Taipinkong, was the man we had vainly sought the evening before—Chen's friend, General Kwei Yung-chun, commander of the Twenty-seventh Army Corps wearing no visible insignia, like many Chinese commanders. He had, it appeared, been quartered just south of Lanfeng and failed to reach Kotien the

night before. As the general had studied military science in Germany, I was able to converse with him and received confirmation that the entire Chinese Army was retiring, leaving behind only a rearguard to cover the retreat.

Were those Japanese we had missed the night before?

Very likely. There were no Chinese armoured cars in the neighbourhood.

But could we reach Lanfeng and join the rearguard?

"I really cannot say," the general answered. "The Japanese are filtering in from the south-east. They were all around us last night, as you noticed. Go on as far as Chenliu and inquire and after that keep well to the north, close to the railway."

Chen took two hand grenades from a soldier's belt and put them in his own. ("Capture, yes; . . . torture, no," he explained). For another hour, we pushed eastward, meeting the general's troops coming back, slight fellows, many of them Southerners with bare feet and broad straw-and-bamboo hats, but carrying their often heavy burdens with the patient ease of the coolie. Then, when only four li (something over a mile) from Chenliu, a soldier jabbered fiercely at us as we passed. Chen stopped our caravan and talked. Then he turned to us and, with his finger, began drawing lines on the ground in the mud.

"Here Kaifeng, here Lanfeng, here Chengliu," he said. "No Chinese Chengliu. Japanese two li here" (he pointed to the south). "You go Lanfeng?"

We stopped and debated: getting to Lanfeng had become almost an obsession. Maybe the soldier was misinformed and we could still slip through?

I knew that if we decided to try it, Chen and his party would stay with us through anything.

Once again the decisive argument was furnished by the Japanese.

Just at this moment, less than half a mile to the south, one of their machine-guns began to rattle monotonously and was almost immediately answered by another to the east. There was no Chinese answering fire. Leaves cut from a nearby tree by bullets began slowly floating to earth.

"Japanese Chengliu," announced Chen, grinning below his helmet and thick glasses as though it was the best joke in the world. "You go Lanfeng?"

We groaned. All morning I had had visions of being ridden down by Japanese cavalry after a wild scamper across those muddy fields, and then trying to explain to troopers with drawn sabres that we were, after all, foreign newspaper men and as much worthy of consideration . . . as the Panay. With the Japs less than a mile away what chance would we six have getting through in broad daylight? And if seen, what could we do with Chen's two hand grenades? By evening, according to General Kwei, it would be too late. We were beaten. The presence of those machine-guns settled it.

But before we turned back, the student suddenly drew from a wallet slung about his neck a handful of tiny illustrated bills in Japanese and let the wind blow them across the fields just where the Japanese would find them. The aim was to incite the Japanese soldiery to revolt. One picture showed a Japanese general whipping a chained Japanese soldier; a second, the same Japanese soldier, now freed, shak-

ing hands with a Chinese soldier; a third, the two together happily sticking a bayonet into the shackled Japanese general. . . .

We faced about and started back. "In all probability," I thought with some bitterness, "I shall die without ever having seen the city of Lanfeng.

2. THE RETREAT

Our goal was Kaifeng where we had left our baggage. Within a short time, for we made speed, we had again caught the laggards among General Kwei's troops and walked along with them. Hardly had we gone a mile before a concealed Japanese light battery off to the south let loose. The marksmanship was good, the fourth shell found the road neatly. But Chen was equal to anything. Hardly had the first shell burst before he had us off the road and once more we were running across the fields away from the column of soldiers that offered the bigger target. When another shell came feeling after us, Chen made us tear large branches from the bushes and hold them high in the air over our heads. Thus camouflaged, he conveyed to us by gestures, we would become invisible to the gunners. Once more he proved to be right. Within another half-hour we had not only ceased to be a target, but were well out of range.

"Nothing to do but take the train back to Chengchow," muttered my companion gloomily. "Imagine not getting to Lanfeng after all this walking. My feet are something awful." So were my own. Since leaving the truck at Chingling station the night before, we had walked seven hours. It was two hours more

before we reached the high crenelated walls of Kaifeng, and still another hour before we entered the Baptist mission in the centre of the town, where we had left our luggage, for all the gates but one were already closed and the approaches mined. Protecting Kaifeng to the east was a broad anti-tank ditch and several lines of trenches, but the latter were unmanned.

Leaving the Chinese waiting at the still open gate, we hurried through the now almost deserted town. We had hoped to find rickshaws. None were to be had. There were hardly any troops inside the walls; clearly, the Chinese intended to put up no very decisive resistance here.

"Hurry, or we shall miss the last train."

We strode through the wet, empty streets on burning feet. The Mission was empty but we found a letter from our runaway interpreter that caused us to smile through our misery. He had, he explained, gone through the most awful experience of his life, for he had sought shelter by leaving us, only to run into the most terrible air raid he had ever known.

Back from the Mission, that merciless mile over rough pavement to the Southern Gate. It was almost completely blocked with bricks and sandbags. A group of soldiers motioned us back but we grinned and pushed between them, hurrying in the direction of the station. And there outside was Chen.

"No train," he announced with the graciousness of a man offering a birthday gift. "Japanese four li. Hear machine-guns. Cannons. Walk now Chungmow, see General Kwei." And, with a broad sweep of his arm, he trotted forward on his heel-less cloth slippers. His tireless coolie added my typewriter to

the heavy load on the bamboo pole and followed. I looked at my watch. It was twenty minutes to two. The alternatives were clear: stay and trust to the Japanese when the town fell, or get out at once. With a groan, I started limping westward after Chen, along the twenty mile road to Chungmow.

A few minutes later, the South Gate was definitely closed to traffic. Some time that afternoon, the Japanese onslaught on Kaifeng began. It was forty-eight hours before the town fell.

Guns were already thundering away to the south; what was that rattle of machine-guns? Shutting my eyes and whistling to forget my feet, I hurried after my companions. Within half an hour we had caught up with another and more fantastic parade.

The weather had changed again. Old women, children, all sorts of soldiers, carts, wheel barrows, rickshaws simply filled the streaming wet highway where the morning's heat had given place to a cold north-east wind that chilled the rain-soaked skin.

Dainty Chinese girls in silken semi-modern dress and slippers, older women hobbling along surprisingly quickly on their bound feet with the aid of long poles on which they balanced; occasional old men; rich wives of merchants in rickshaws; peasant girls plodding stolidly; tiny children wet to the skin but impassive in the long-suffering Chinese way; whole families on heavy ox carts with solid wooden wheels, drawn by inconceivable combinations of domestic animals, their small household goods all mixed up with the equipment of the soldiers trotting beside them; babies in boxes on tiny wheels or strapped to the back of tottering older children, occasional

sturdy farmers lifting the handles of gigantic loaded wheel barrows, their remaining donkey or wife or children pulling in front; these were inextricably mixed with the retreating Chinese army. There were almost no motor vehicles, and the few were piled to the sky with women and goods and attempts to purchase transportation were sternly refused. There seemed eternally no proper transport and, after the loss of rolling stock at Hsuchow and Kweiteh, the authorities were careful to keep what remained out of the reach of the Japanese.

An occasional horseman trotted by; a few officers and officials pedalled along on bicycles. But except for occasional groups on the ox-carts, most of the soldiers, like most of the refugees, simply walked, although many, like the writer and his colleague, had come from places well to the east of Kaifeng. Soldiers in every shade of khaki, from dust yellow to pale green and blue, peasants in everything under the sun, all were mingled in one endless procession. Occasionally, an ox-cart would have to stop, as a starved horse collapsed under the strain and died.

Sometimes a man did the same. Never had I seen such wounded. They were few enough, the bulk having simply been left behind, somewhere. But those who could walked. Helped by comrades or limping alone, Chinese soldiers with bandaged arm, shoulder or leg, staggered forward along that endless rain-swept highway. Many were able to keep erect only thanks to long poles like those of the deformed old women. Their faces pale almost to Occidental pallor, or drawn into knots with the pain, they stubbornly went on. A bareheaded boy staggered

forward, his steel helmet pressed to his belly and in his helmet a section of intestines. Not an ambulance in sight, not a doctor. Only very occasionally a wounded man seemed to have found temporary rest on top of a piled ox-cart or within the semi-waterproof curtains of a rickshaw.

It was interesting to compare this retreat with the Italian defeat at Caporetto in 1917, in which I participated. The same inextricable mixture of soldiers and refugees, the same pitilessly streaming rain over the flat plain. But there the resemblance ended. Caporetto was part rout, part military strike. The well-armed, well-clothed, well-fed Italian soldiers simply abandoned vast quantities of material in wild disorder and, in a frame of mind varying from panic to elation, started for home.

This army had next to no equipment, the southern soldiers never had had shoes; there was hardly a coat in the long defile, steel helmets were the exception. Bayonets were anything but universal. On the other hand, umbrellas were plentiful. I saw a few machine-guns, one small thing that looked like a trench mortar, one anti-aircraft gun. In the course of two days on the road with troops, I hardly noticed more than half a dozen batteries of field guns. During a week, not a single Chinese airplane flew over us while Jap 'planes were everywhere. Of kitchens there was none: a few iron kettles on bamboo poles were about all. For the rest, each soldier seemed to carry his own food, and there was a lively trade in, and pilfering of chickens and ducks along the way. One saw soldiers and refugees eating together from common pots. But what war material the Chinese

had, they kept. I doubt if the entire retreat from Lanfeng westward to Chengchow cost them more than eight or nine guns, lost by carelessness. As for marching, there is no force in the world equal to these thinly clad, barefoot soldiers. The rare officers smiled and once or twice joked with us in English. I expected a demoralization. There was none. Retreat meant nothing to this army: after all, was not one place as good as another? A few soldiers scowled at a pair of limping newspapermen, but most smiled at the unusual sight of two foreign "masters" hoofing it out of reach of the Japs. Some offered portions of their scanty food and questionable drink. I received the loan of a bicycle for an hour, a boon to blistered feet, rested a precious half hour on a cart drawn by one cow, one pregnant donkey and two mules, and finally, towards night, when the rain was falling in torrents, climbed aboard a passing telephone truck and rode the last few miles to Chungmow packed tight among coolie soldiers. Not once did I see signs of anger or depression.

Chungmow is an ancient walled city of the worst sort. The houses are small and dingy, the unpaved streets had become quagmires under the drenching rain, and only by haughtily producing passes, signed by *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek himself, were two correspondents allowed to hobble up its main street, asking vainly for the headquarters of our acquaintance General Kwei Yung-chun, who had told us at Taipinkong, early the same morning, that he expected to spend the night at Chungmow. None seemed to have heard of him, and finally an officer, whom we pestered with questions in languages he did

not speak, shoved us through an open door into a dingy room lined with benches. It might have been an opium den: it turned out to be a bath house with benches whereon the Chinese like to lie and repose after the fatiguing process of the bath. Barely able to move, we collapsed upon two benches and began removing layer after layer of well-soaked clothing.

A boy approached and obviously wanted to know our business. We were able to order tea and explain by motions we had come a long way on foot from the front. The boy was sympathetic. But how to make clear that we wanted our outer garments dried, if possible, before the kitchen fire? When we got to this point, "Can I help you, gentlemen?" said a pleasant voice behind us. We almost collapsed with astonishment. It was an employee of the admirable Chinese postal service. And from that moment everything went swimmingly. Food could no longer be bought in the rapidly emptying city. But what the post office official had, he shared with us, and we dined sumptuously (we had had no lunch) on a Chinese roll and a handful of peanuts, washed down by innumerable cups of tea and a little Chinese brandy that caused our teeth to stop chattering, donated by the proprietor. We had no bedding and the bench in the bath-house was anything but soft, but I slept soundly. The next morning, Saturday, we learned that General Kwei had, indeed, come, but also gone the night before, further west, to distant Loyang.

Our chafed and blistered feet were festering. But somehow or other we had to get back to Chengchow before the Japanese could cut the railway line south of the town and prevent our return to Hankow.

Something came steaming into Chungmow station from the west. We almost shouted: maybe it would soon be returning. But it turned out to be an armoured train sent up to the last bit of track up to the blown up bridges to help cover the retreat of the few divisions that were still holding out in Kaifeng and points east. Meanwhile friend Chen, who had spent the night at a farm, appeared with the student propagandist, the two coolies and our baggage. Together, around noon, we set out along the railroad ties on the last twenty-two mile section of our trek to the west.

The rain had ceased falling, the sun came out, the heat was intense. Soon we decided to leave our baggage with the friendly Chinese comrades and their worn but faithful coolies and to push ahead as fast as we could.

We did. In the next three hours we covered ten bitter miles, finding ourselves in the very midst of a retreating Chinese division. Some soldiers led along three captured Japanese by ropes thin as string. More men with barely dressed wounds hobbled along at a surprisingly fast pace, showing no signs of pain. The Chinese claimed to have over two hundred military hospitals, but in the absence of ambulances it was up to these men to get themselves out of immediate danger, if they wished for real treatment, and most of them were doing it.

But as the heat grew greater and our feet ever more painful, we were soon thinking principally of ourselves. At the eleven-mile mark, there was a station. Here we paused for a drink. The water they offered came from an open well in which a dead frog was floating. With sporadic cholera all over the place,

with typhoid endemic and dysentery as common as cold in the head, one would hardly have taken a greater risk in drinking arsenic. But there was no other liquid available except the slimy green pools from which some of the soldiers had been drinking. The temptation was torture. Choking back tears, I put it behind me. Just then a soldier caught my sleeve and led me indoors. In a great iron caldron rice was boiling. I dipped up a cupful of the scalding water and gulped it down.

Once again luck came. We had abandoned the pitiless railway ties and were walking across a field toward the highroad when we were hailed in English. It was a somewhat portly Chinese officer who had been surprised by the presence of two Westerners amid this crowd of Chinese. He cross-questioned us and we explained our adventures, our exhaustion and our desire to reach Chengchow as quickly as possible in order to reach Hankow before the Linghan Railway should be cut.

"We," he said, "are a medical unit of which I am the general. We are going over here to wait at a farm-house until a motor truck arrives to take us to Chengchow. My son studied in the United States. He lived with people who treated him like one of the family. I should like to be good to an American. For his sake I shall take you both along in the motor truck with us." It was a voice from Heaven.

For an hour we lay on the ground in the farm courtyard and drank cup after cup of sterile water fresh from the boiling kettle. Nightfall found us back at the American Baptist Hospital in Chengchow, our feet dressed, eating American food.

Anxiously we inquired if the railway to Hankow had as yet been cut.

"No trains came in yesterday," the doctors told us, "but to-night there may be one. Eat quickly and go straight to the station and wait."

The station was crammed to suffocation with soldiers and refugees. I had seen similar places in Soviet Russia bursting with prospective travellers patiently waiting for a conveyance; I had stood up all night with refugees from the invaded regions in war-time Italy; never did I see anything quite so crowded as the station at Chengchow. Hours passed. There was no train for Hankow.

Instead, two or three tracks away, another train stood quietly under full steam. It consisted of two parlour sleeping-cars in which a dozen officers sat at quiet tables before the windows and drank; two freight-cars loaded with unseen merchandise; and four flat-cars. Soldiers were loading the flat-cars with motor-trucks and passenger automobiles, obviously at the disposal of the occupants of the parlour cars.

"Where is that train going?" I asked.

"Westward to Sian."

"Why don't the soldiers get on it instead of waiting here for something that may never come?"

"Because it is a generals' train."

"But the generals could double up a little and take less space. And they could send the motor vehicles by road to Sian and fill up those flatcars with tired soldiers."

"Not Chinese generals."

When the last of the flatcars was loaded, the generals' train pulled out, making way for the

passenger train which had been waiting to enter the station. It was one in the morning. Thanks to a friendly station master, we secured two spots on the floor of a baggage car, and slept. When we awoke, the train had passed the danger point. Transferring to Number One Express, itself crowded to the roof, with a crowd of soldiers who howled vainly for admittance to the compartment, after one air raid and two hot boxes, we reached Hankow only sixteen hours late.

In the train we had met a foreign railway employee. "Watch out in the next few days," he had said. "That armoured train you met at Chungmow was not so much sent there to cover the retreat as to protect the Chinese working on the Yellow River dykes north of the town."

"Funny moment to be building up the dykes. . . ."

He winked. "Who said anything about building them up. You know the river is higher than the plain."

"Yes."

"Well, the Chinese are planting dynamite in the dykes in two places not far from Chungmow." And again he winked.

A few days later the Chinese High Command issued a statement to the effect that Japanese airmen, dropping bombs near the Yellow River, had burst the dykes and the water was pouring southward across the plain just between the Pinghan Railway and the advancing Japanese columns.

"Very providential of the Japanese," remarked my companion.

That was the day when Chen Chen-tse appeared in Hankow with our abandoned baggage. There are not many like Chen.

VII

CHINA IN UNIFORM

"*. . . Der Soldat, der Soldat,*
Ist der feinste Mann im ganzen Staat."
German Marching Song.

CHINA must always have had armies for the country was frequently at war. But nowhere was military prestige so low as among the "Sons of Han." Great generals were celebrated in verse and on the stage and some of the poets themselves were soldiers. But they never seem to have felt much but contempt for the profession. Anything further from the romantic feudalism of medieval Europe or modern Japan could hardly be imagined.

Almost inevitably, one would think, the quality of the Army suffered. In these early contacts with western enemies Chinese soldiers were something of a joke. They were in the habit of firing once or twice and then going somewhere else, leaving the enemy in possession of the field. This was quite in accordance with the classical treatises on strategy which always urged, allowing the foe to escape by one way or another. The struggles between the rival "war lords" all seemed to be governed by the strictest conventionality. It was rather like beer-gang rivalries in the United States. Look as you might, it was impossible to discover the germ of an idea.

This first began to change during the campaigns of unification waged by Chiang Kai-shek against all rivals in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties. But the fact that Chiang's troops, representing at least nominally Chinese unity and nationalism, could still sometimes be successfully opposed by the provincial armies under half independent governors, by private mercenaries under war lords or, in the case of the Communists, by a disciplined but miserably equipped Party army, proves how difficult it was to make willing and efficient soldiers out of Chinese.

Evidence of definite transformation was first given, not by Chiang's forces, but by the Nineteenth Route Army at Shanghai in 1932. In their heroic resistance to the far better armed Japanese, while Chiang's two million men stood by idly and watched, these soldiers gave promise of the even more stubborn Chinese resistance against greater Japanese forces five years later. To all who wished to see, it was clear first that the "Sons of Han" were approaching a stage where their emotions could be aroused by a patriotic appeal, and second, that once so aroused, the Chinese "human material" was capable of being made into a first class military machine.

The final signal for Chinese military awakening was the second Japanese aggression of 1937. Chiang's crack divisions immediately gave a good account of themselves. There was a surge of patriotism that surprised nearly everyone, residents as well as outsiders. Remarkable was the fact, not so much that Chiang's few German-trained divisions fought and fought well, but that after their final defeat and the virtual rout at Nanking, China as a whole stood the

shock and became more determined than ever. Circles that had hitherto remained indifferent, if not to China's fate, at least to the military effort which alone could ultimately transform the Japanese invasion into something favourable to China, suddenly became patriotic.

From one end to the other of this pathetically pacifist country, where the soldier had been something below a servant and hardly distinguishable from a common criminal, the bugles began to blow—no wailing Chinese laments but short, stirring, martial calls. New songs of battle, sprung from nowhere, were suddenly sung from one end of the country to the other. One heard them from soldiers, from students, from Chinese newspaper men. They were introduced into the schools, popularized among refugee children, introduced into austere centres of highly academic scholarship.

China had revered sages. It paid homage to the political theorist and revolutionary, Sun Yat-sen. But it certainly had never accepted as its most popular and representative figure a soldier. Yet within a few months after the outbreak of hostilities *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek had become the patriot-hero, the universally acknowledged leader and the symbol of a renascent nation in which nationalism was fairly bubbling. This process was of course consciously encouraged by the authorities; not only by the Chiang group who had the most to gain from it, but by former opponents of the *Generalissimo*, by all those who, determined to oppose the Japanese to the bitter end, recognized in the silent soldier the only living Chinese who could mobilize all energies, rally

all factions, focus the entire national feeling on New China's first armed struggle. With the elevation of Chiang Kai-shek inevitably went a reversal of ancient values: from being the lowest of the low, the soldier abruptly became the highest figure in the country.

The results were immediate. Not only the young people poured upon soldiers departing for the front a vast store of emotion. Not only everything became a hymn to war and struggle—theatre, literature, books, art, posters and public placards. But getting into some sort of uniform became almost a necessity. And from Hong Kong to Burmah, from the Wuhan-cities to the stony wastes of Gobi and the steppes of Outer Mongolia, everyone adopted military dress. There were soldiers, soldiers, soldiers everywhere, literally millions of them, in all sorts of colours from dark cream or dust-coloured khaki through the yellows and the browns to a vivid light green and overall blue. An immense crop of new-made officers accompanied this mass, their uniforms more sober in colour. Generals wore small insignia on their collars while most of the junior officers showed their rank by round pinned buttons like an American political badge, above which was often another button with the features of *Generalissimo* Chiang. Military police, or soldiers on police duty, could be distinguished by badges big as playing cards covered by a sheet of mica against the rain, while common soldiers' units were sometimes apparent on their sleeves.

Not only the soldiers affected uniforms. The six sorts of police (whose power to arrest was often

keenly resented), the students and school children, postmen, boy scouts, sanitary men from the famous Buddhist good-will brotherhood who had discovered the swastika two or three thousand years before Adolf Hitler, the mass of Government employees, all got out of their graceful ancient robes or sloppy Occidental dress and into some sort of uniform. So strong was the contagion that even persons with no official quality whatever found it proper to turn up in that half-military, half-overall costume with high collar and without visible shirt, first adopted by the Russian Bolsheviks.

Thousands and thousands of women followed the men's example. Robes and baggy trousers were the time-honoured common property of both sexes. Putting the girls into pants, though a great esthetic loss, was no novelty for them. New was the voluntary merging of the elegant, half westernized youth of both sexes into the drab and anonymous mass of the nation. It became fashionable to be merely militant Chinese. On the outside, Capitalist and Communist, mandarin and coolie, became indistinguishable.

This did not mean that all the Chinese who should have been were actually fighting or seeking employment at the front. From an Occidental viewpoint the country was simply full of "*embusqués*" who used birth, position, education, influence or power as a reason for avoiding danger zones. The moral duty of the best actually to lead the rank and file for the sake of example was not always followed or understood. *Noblesse oblige* was something new to unromantic China. One could still meet a physician or a scholar who referred disdainfully to China's struggle as a

"coolies' war." Any number of the superfluous officials could obviously be spared for the front. Yet so long as there was no lack of other recruits, just what, the Chinese asked, was the use of "wasting the educated minority"?

However little enthusiasm the privileged showed in volunteering for the front, there could be no thought of their actually disobeying a summons to do so—at least, not anywhere but in the remote districts of Szechwan and Yunnan. The new discipline was rigorously enforced, reaching in certain corps and training schools and barracks a truly Prussian precision. Schoolboys and refugee children snapped to attention on command. Recruits but three weeks under the celestial flag (white sun against blue sky on red ground) moved like machines at the sharp treble bark of the drill sergeant. Was this the people of individualists considered too uncompromising to govern themselves, reputed without national pride or civic feeling? Where was the traditional Chinese anarchy?

Now in the strict sense it was true that they were not governing themselves. They were being ruled by a semi-military Government based on Chiang Kai-shek and the Soongs, on the Army and on the Kuomintang Party organization. Foreigners thought to detect a gradual decrease of *Kuomintang* influence in favour of the *Generalissimo's* personal military machine. In certain provinces, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Szechwan, Shensi, the central military authority had to come to terms with and govern through the local authorities. Governors of provinces, most of them "generals" (in China an

honorary title rather than a precise military rank), sometimes overlooked the orders of the shaven-headed *Generalissimo* at Hankow at whom they had formerly snapped their fingers. They were no longer snapping them. That might easily bring them before a firing squad. For as the war progressed, and Chiang's incredibly Chinese tactics began to justify themselves, the authority of the Central Government grew. For it was based, not so much on fear and military discipline, as on the backing of virtually the entire group of educated Chinese, China or foreign trained, Capitalist, Communist, modern technician or ancient literary scholar, united in a common loathing of the Japanese invaders. This group controlled the bureaucracy, occupied the positions of technical leadership, directed popular education. Their immediate influence, plus the redoubtable facts that Chiang alone possessed the quality of leadership, an army and plenty of money, vastly outshone any other conceivable luminary. Strengthened by the flame of popular indignation, Chiang's influence spread even to large sections of the once so indifferent, still too passive, long-suffering, all-enduring, all-surviving mass of coolies, probably the toughest population in the world.

Once the reborn Chinese nation began giving its best energies to the war, everything, or nearly, had to be improvised. Modern China was after all confined to a few towns on the coast. In the interior, one still saw little girls, their feet bound to make them tiny; the women themselves lived in actual subjection to the men whatever their formal status. A vast amount of opium smoking went on and so-called leaders lived

upon the profits from it. Filth and excrement and disease existed on an indescribable scale. The few modern physicians had hardly begun to tackle the ancient fermentations, purify the water, give a first faint semblance of sanitation to the houses, root out deeply anchored superstitions that made for over-population, mental and physical deficiency, suffering and degradation. Illiteracy was still the rule. Statistically the picture of China even in wartime remained appalling. But statistics are dead. China was very much alive and each day more consciously so. During the war the transformation from ancient to modern was fantastically speeded up. It could not prevail in a year nor even in a decade. The hour for a new synthesis between all that was finest in old China's culture, its science, art and philosophy, and the borrowed Occidental civilization that was slowly transforming the country—a graft which could again make the Chinese the highly creative people they once were—had not yet struck. But something brand new was making steady headway, particularly among the youth.

Why then the need for conscription? Surely the inexhaustible well of Chinese man-power should have furnished enough real volunteers to make obligatory service unnecessary. Several explanations were available. Some people said that the peasants, the bulk of any conceivable Chinese army, would not volunteer in sufficient numbers. Others pointed to the need for social justice and particularly for unifying the hitherto centrifugally tending provinces under a common flag and a common discipline. Perhaps the truth lay somewhere between the two. By

conscription the *Generalissimo* was unquestionably mixing and binding together in a common task and a common feeling men who had never before felt much in common. But also, without the shadow of a doubt he was making sure that the overwhelming superiority in numbers that was, with the vast distance, China's greatest asset, should be under all circumstances maintained without discussion. Introduction of conscription into China no more meant a failing morale than introduction of conscription in highly educated Great Britain during the World War testified to failing national resolution. The important thing after the Nanking disaster was the reconstitution of a powerful National Army, in contrast to the numerous strong Provincial armies that had in the past done the country so much mischief.

This reconstituted National Army, comprising men from all parts of the country, including white turbaned, bearded Moslems from Turkestan and "directors" of Mongolian fighting "Banners," completely changed the scene. After a year of warfare, it had grown to somewhere around two hundred divisions of so-called "regular" soldiers. Many were poorly equipped, ill-trained, badly officered. But as the war progressed, Chinese morale progressed with it. Considering that the number of really trained Chinese soldiers was very low indeed, there was nothing surprising in the fact that it took an immense number of Chinese to oppose or "contain" the hundreds of thousands of Japanese troops engaged in invading China.

A complete picture of the organization of China's fighting forces was difficult to obtain if only because

of the infinite variety of origin, and the transformation of Provincial to National. In communist Shensi it was not the same as in militarist Kwangsi, for example. It did not seem to be identical in Hopei. But in a general way, the situation seemed somewhat as follows:

Reserves were being drawn from two sources, the National Army training units established right throughout the country and the remains of the former Provincial armies which were being not so much abolished as emptied of their contents. In some provinces this emptying process was almost complete, in others, Szechwan and Yunnan for example, it had hardly begun. But each province was regularly sending to the battle zone slightly more men than were being lost as casualties. Had China possessed the requisite war material or unlimited credit with which to obtain it, the army strength could at any time have been doubled and its quality perhaps increased four-fold. Lacking such credit, lacking perhaps the possibility of purchase on so large a scale in a war-mad world, lacking transport, equipment, medical services and supplies, everything must remain sketchy. China was making efforts in the way of producing its own arms. Small arm production was pronounced "nearly adequate." Hand grenades could apparently be supplied in profusion by a people adept in the making of cannon crackers. Trench mortars seemed to be well within Chinese capacity to produce and one heard of the manufacture of some artillery, though the more usual type of field gun was captured from the Japanese and badly served. Airplanes (but not motors) were being produced on a

small scale. But at best this production was hopelessly inadequate and until conditions changed China must continue on an endless defensive that tried the native *morale* horribly, while at the same time putting a heavy strain upon the arrogant but worried Japanese.

Aside from furnishing recruits to the National Army, the provincial armies did garrison service at home. One heard complaints that in many districts these provincial armies were too numerous. But that was an ancient problem in China. So long as the local régime failed to win the confidence of the masses, the local rulers leaned for their support on Provincial forces they obstinately but logically refused to sacrifice.

Behind the Provincial Armies, often supplying them as they supplied the National forces, were "Able-bodied Youth" units, a sort of local militia dividing their time between public training service and everyday tasks. Militarily they were used only locally. Their presence nonetheless constituted a sort of guarantee that China's war strength would be indefinitely maintained so long as the arms supply held out. There were a considerable number of women within their ranks.

A final source of military strength, destined perhaps to become the most important of all as the war wore on, were the irregular or guerrilla bands. The Eighth Route Army, formerly communist, took the lead in organizing these, as in many other innovations and reforms. Realizing the latent possibilities of a patriotic peasantry, they everywhere appealed for co-operation to the population. Seeing their success,

the National military authorities also organized special schools for training guerrilla leaders, to which officers from every division were sent. When ready for action, these officers managed to take a small amount of military material and a handful of absolutely trustworthy men through the lines to the region assigned for their activity. Once on the spot they enlisted the inhabitants, often within the very cities or villages which the Japanese claimed to be holding. Indistinguishable by day from the bulk of the population, the bandsmen, assisted by old men, women and little children doing intelligence service, by night turned into ferocious raiders, murdering sentries, overwhelming small posts, cutting telephone and telegraph wires, dynamiting railway tracks and bridges, worrying the Japanese in a hundred ways. When caught they were summarily executed or tortured and the villages that gave them shelter or assistance were cruelly punished. But so far from terrorizing, this brutality merely enraged and stimulated the guerrillas. It was amazing with what ease they passed from one side to the other of the fighting zone, preferably concentrating their activities on regions well behind the lines, right up to the houses of Peiping and Shanghai. As the lines lengthened and the guerrilla forces increased, the toll in dead taken from the Japanese rose steadily until it was estimated in June, 1938, by the Chinese Chief of Staff, General Pai (Pei) Hsung-chi, at over five hundred a day with no tendency to diminish. Probably many more Japanese were killed behind the lines than in open battle. No wonder that there was a distinct decrease in *morale* on the

part of the Japanese soldiery. Lured into the war by the promise of a quick and easy victory, they found themselves not only surrounded by a very numerous, lightly armed mobile enemy they could never somehow seem to draw into decisive battle, like terriers around a leopard, but by millions of hostile civilians strengthened by the guerrillas, who at the least opportunity turned into savage killers that gave the invaders neither peace nor rest nor quarter.

Yet clearly the bulk of the resistance had to be made by the National Army under or co-operating with Chiang Kai-shek, and more or less trained, often by German military advisers who were more valuable in this field than in that of strategy, where their European conceptions were often unheeded by the Chinese. What was the military temper and value of this army?

Strictly speaking it was not an army at all, and its successes were something of a surprize. In 1917 the Americans, an active aggressive people trained in sport of all kinds, familiar with mechanics from babyhood and capable of spontaneous discipline, found that to turn a civilian into a mediocre soldier took six months; into a competent officer, at least a full year. In pacific China, without much mechanical experience and with no tradition of physical sport or combat, officers and men often received no more than three months training. They remained, that is, merely armed civilians whose real military training was later obtained on the field of battle where incredibly heavy losses kept the number of veterans reduced to a nucleus. Add to this an insufficiency in

all equipment larger than hand grenades, absolutely crushing in artillery, aviation and transport, and it was rather a wonder that the Chinese so-called armies could keep the field at all. Yet improperly clothed and cared for as they were, trotting on bare feet while the Japanese rode in trucks, the Chinese soldiers despite terrific losses not only stood fast but actually gained every day in military quality.

Somehow the average Chinese soldier quickly acquired the impression that he was, despite his lack of mechanical support, man to man, quite a match for his adversary. He despized the Japanese anyway and looked forward to fighting him at close quarters with the ancient Chinese two-handed sword. Above all, he was never worn out, never impatient or bad humoured, never downcast by insufficient food and shelter, and almost never afraid, though he soon learned a healthy respect for enemy airplanes, artillery and machine-guns. Judged as human "material," the Chinese soldiers, despite susceptibility to sudden panic, were rated by all foreign experts as first class.

Up to the rank of sergeant only: the officers were quite another matter. The *Generalissimo* demoted, cashiered and even shot them relentlessly. Not that they often went over to the Japanese. But they frequently disobeyed or failed to execute orders, failed to co-operate with or deliberately deceived their Chinese colleagues, wasted their men in futile attacks when they should have retired or, more often, beat hasty retreats before quite insufficient enemy forces; not uncommonly they practiced self protection at the expense of China and filled up their staffs

rather with faithful retainers than with capable assistants. What could one expect? Some of them had been "war lords" or even bandit chiefs; others, semi-independent governors of provinces with a dislike of Chiang Kai-shek. Their primary aim was frequently keeping their own forces intact while using up those of their colleagues in order to keep trump cards for a possible final show-down. This led to a "masterly inactivity" which, however successful in former military competitions (called wars) between rival Chinese military parasites, played into the hands of the Japanese. Even those generals who had received military training abroad or in the National War Colleges had never had the slightest opportunity of witnessing real warfare and the book knowledge was of little use in the complicated art of adopting one's tactics to getting the better of a more highly armed and trained adversary. Therefore the many failures, some of them tragic. Gradually, however, as in Spain, there arose in nearly every unit a small number of really competent leaders who gradually came to the places of responsibility.

The officer corps was somewhat better than the generals, being for the most part younger and with a larger trained nucleus. Their weaknesses as field officers were conceit that led them into over-estimating themselves and under-estimating the enemy; slap-dash bravery that led to ineffective slaughter of their men; inexperience that made for failure to deliver a decisive blow when it could be delivered; or, sometimes, what has been called an over-developed sense of self-preservation. All in all, unworthy of their men and deserving the rough

treatment received at the hands of Chiang. Things being as they were, the Chinese were compelled to pit courage, numbers, knowledge of the ground and the co-operation of the population against the far higher cohesion and military technique of their enemy. These factors were more often than not ineffective against education, military tradition, technical education and above all vastly superior engines of war. On this account small mechanized columns of Japanese went practically wherever they liked, walking through the masses of courageously struggling Chinese with relatively small losses, leaving the latter no alternative but hit-and-run tactics and long retreats.

Fortunately for China, the Japanese Army did not come up to expectations. The China campaign definitely cost it its place among ranking military machines. The men, well trained and brave, come of an ancient military race. But the generals engaged in costly rivalries; field officers thought more of keeping their swords polished to a mirror and boasting of the number of Chinese personally killed than of developing some new tactic adequate to the realities of the unexpected Chinese resistance. Fearful of becoming too heavily engaged in China, already aware of the danger of long run economic struggle with the ultimately richer Chinese, Japan endeavoured to break China's resistance with manifestly inadequate forces. Japanese troops held the ground wherever they stood; they occupied the chief Chinese towns; they more or less maintained precariously long communications along road and rail and river against constant and effective molestation. Their soldiers

had been duped by promise of a pleasant military promenade with plenty of Chinese to plunder and abuse. Plunder and abuse them they did, but at a fearful risk of life. Had the million Chinese front-line fighters possessed the training and equipment of the Japanese or even of Chiang's original German-trained divisions, without heavy reinforcements, the Japanese would have been swept back into the sea. As it was, holding the sea routes, with a virtual blockade of the Chinese coast, they were able to carry on an offensive that became each day more bloody, in the ever diminishing hope that some day they would succeed in dealing the blow that would "break China." Short of such decisive stroke, with the Chinese armies hardening under experience, with the war zone ever broadening and the lines of communication getting ever longer, the best the Japanese could hope for was to "occupy" China in view of future economic exploitation. "Occupy" a great section of it they did—on the map. But they "occupied" it about as effectively as a few swimmers can be said to "occupy" a swimming pool: they went, that is, virtually where they pleased on condition of making the requisite effort. But even when they were going ahead fastest, the waters were closing in behind, relentlessly obliterating all but a foamy track in the wake of the advance.

VIII

JAPAN MODIFIES ITS WAR AIMS

JIU-JITSU is a form of wrestling, the essential of which is to yield to the adversary's muscular effort in order that he may over-reach himself and bring about his own undoing. The Japanese are said to have invented it. But one could not long watch the Japanese invasion of China without coming to the conclusion that here again the Japanese were mere imitators. For the entire Chinese defence was primarily an application of military jiu-jitsu. Lacking a proper army of sufficient size, the Chinese had to reckon with the frequently demonstrated fact that a heavily armed Japanese column could, within a certain radius, go anywhere it chose, provided the general was ready to pay the price in human lives. Thanks to the adoption of jiu-jitsu tactics, in spite of an almost uninterrupted series of Japanese victories, the Chinese in a certain negative way managed to impose their type of warfare upon the invaders.

Russia has several times been saved from conquest and ultimate defeat less by the Russian military forces than by their allies, Admiral Frost and General Distance. China never had much of a navy; and it is on the whole a warm country with severe cold only in the north. But even without Tibet, Mongolia,

Turkestan and other areas claimed but not really in possession of the Chinese, China is a large country. If superimposed in its own latitude upon the United States, it would extend roughly from the State of Maine to Mexico City and from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. This extension must be kept well in mind in judging any claims of the Japanese to have "occupied" China. In the first year of the war, the Japanese, at the greatest estimates, never had more than seven or eight hundred thousand men at any one time in China south of Manchuria. Could one imagine a foreign army, however well equipped with transport, occupying the United States with a million men? They would be driven out by the population with golf sticks and shot-guns. The Chinese are less combative than the Americans but there are well over four hundred million of them.

The inside story—or history—of this war could not be ascertained or written while it was in progress. But the outlines were at all times apparent. In the first place, the entire military initiative was and remained with the Japanese. It was the latter who, from stolen Manchuria, Jehol and Chahar, launched the initial attack upon China after creating the incident at the Marco Polo Bridge in July, 1937. It was the Japanese who almost immediately extended the zone of operations to Shanghai and the Yangtse Valley. It was the Japanese fleet that blockaded the entire Chinese coast and whose airmen scattered murder among the towns of Southern China. Therefore, it is perhaps most convenient to analyse the campaign in terms of successive Japanese political

aims, never forgetting that the motive of the Japanese Government and of the Army and Navy operating in China, need not and did not necessarily coincide at all times.

The first aim was simply to take over the five northernmost Chinese provinces, join them economically to stolen Manchuria and conceivably use them subsequently as a base for an attack upon Soviet Russia, considered by Japanese Imperialists and military men as an inevitable step in the fulfilment of Japan's manifest destiny. Here no serious difficulties were expected. The provinces are, with the exception of rocky Shansi and part of Shantung, entirely flat. They contain more railway lines than any other portion of the country. Why should the Chinese try to defend them any more than they had defended Manchuria ? At most the Japanese needed only to overcome the local Chinese, whose leaders were hardly to be considered loyal to Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking. Then it only remained necessary to find the requisite number of corrupt or traitorous Chinese, constitute them into Jap-dominated "puppet" governments propped on Japanese bayonets and mercenary forces, as in Manchuria, and set about profitable economic exploitation. To avoid the least possibility of unpleasant surprize, it was considered prudent to seize the communications between Northern China and the Soviets across Inner Mongolia.

The Chinese Central Government's decision to defend the provinces was a political bombshell because none in Tokyo had expected Chiang to fight. Yet to many it was a welcome bombshell for it gave

the Japanese Army the awaited opportunity of settling China's affairs, not gradually, as had been foreseen, but all at once. Militarily, Chiang's decision did not immediately change the situation. The Japanese forces seized Peiping and occupied the road and the railway to Russia; they advanced southward through Shantung and poured southwestward into rich Shansi, the site of most of the coveted mineral wealth, as far as the Yellow River, almost succeeding in crossing and cutting the Lunghai, only east-west Chinese railway, just south of it. The Lunghai Railway was the near end of the only remaining connection between China and Soviet Turkestan. The northern Chinese railways were like the points of a trident of which the Lunghai was the base and the extension of the Pinghan (or middle point) southward to Hankow and Canton, the handle. The Japanese Army was if anything over-mechanized for the territory on which it operated; the invaders found it inexpedient to go far from the railways and good roads. Occupying China took the form of stretching a few clothes-lines across a yard. But though the stretching was easy, the protecting was a problem, while between the lines the Chinese never ceased to come and go almost at will.

A Provisional Government was set up in Peiping, renamed Peking, or Northern Capital, to give it prestige, and within a short time the enforced traffic in narcotics in which the Japanese had for a long time been specialized, was flourishing. The hitch came in finding proper puppets: the moral quality of the Chinese who consented to serve the invaders was so low that their influence in inducing the Chinese

masses to accept Japanese rule was negligible. Nonetheless, some persons were found. Nominally, at least, the primary Japanese aim was realized with relative facility and had the Japanese stopped there and dug in, the Chinese could probably no more have thrown them out than they could from Manchuria beyond. Sooner or later such an occupation behind barbed wire was almost bound to become effective and even profitable.

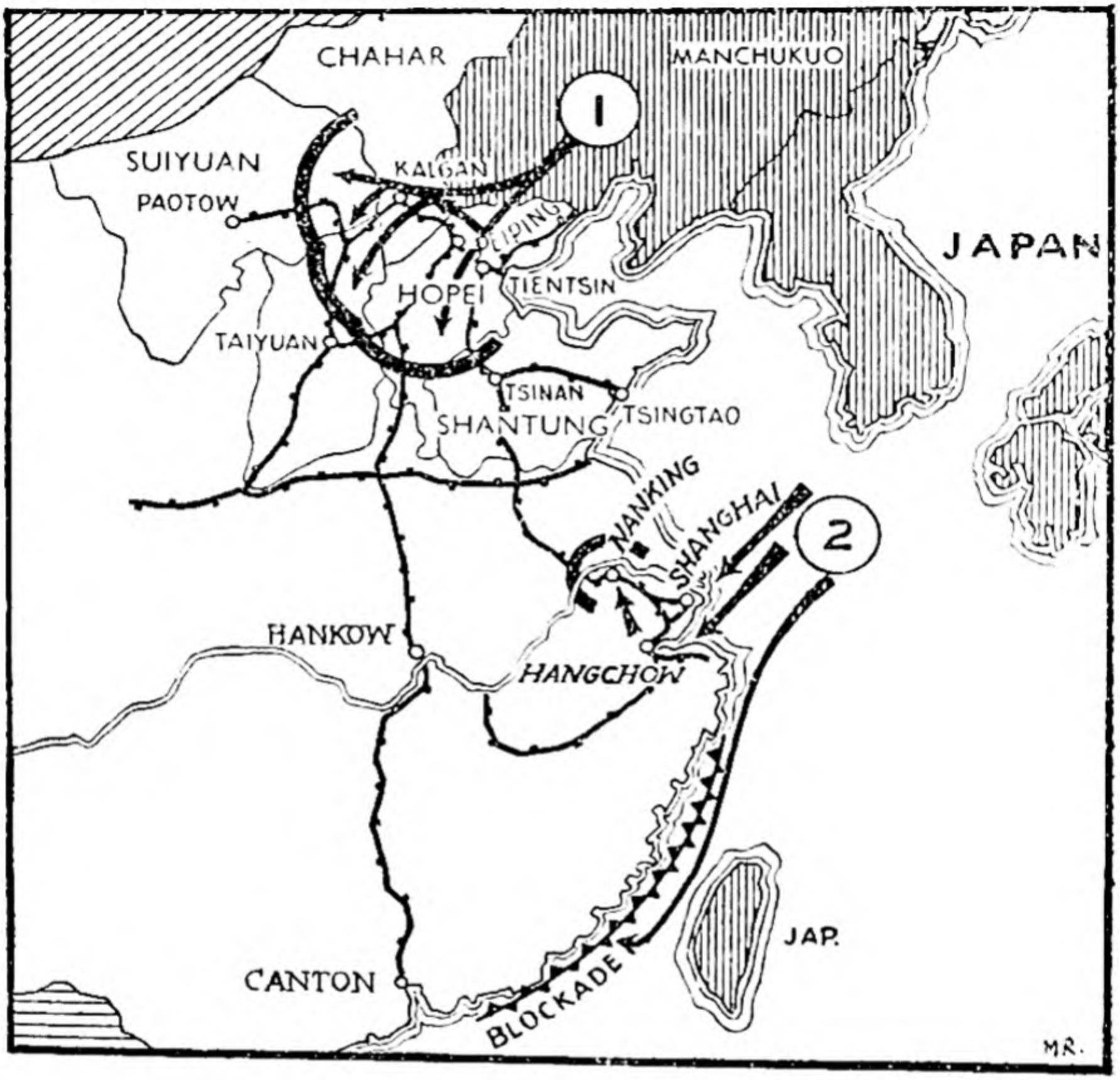
Stopping, however, entailed a serious risk. Low as the Japanese leaders estimated the Chinese, they could not but realize that Chinese unity was virtually accomplished, that Chinese industrialization was going ahead apace and that the improvement in quality of the Chinese National Army under German tutelage was disquietingly rapid. Were China given a few more years for increasing its industrial equipment, enlarging and modernizing its army, educating and fanaticizing its population, the result could be very unpleasant for Japan. After all, why be satisfied with the mere seizure of the provinces? South of the Yellow River lay the Yangtse Valley, the richest part of China, with the capital, Nanking, and rich cosmopolitan Shanghai. Why be satisfied with less than the best?

In the absence of precise information, one need only note that the requisite second "incident" almost immediately occurred at Shanghai, and Japan launched a campaign of further conquest.

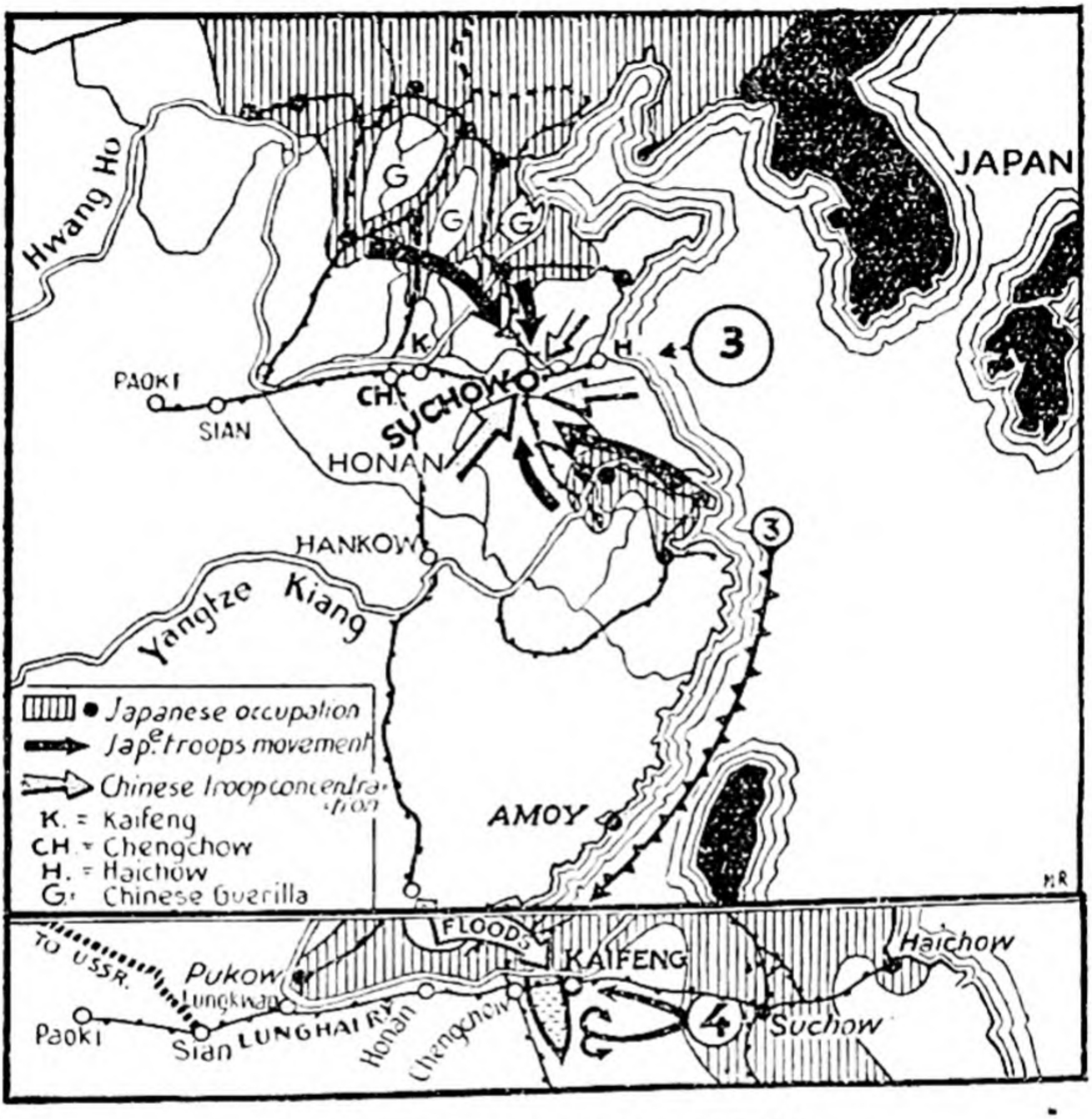
A large Japanese army landed at Shanghai. Tokyo emitted a declaration to the effect that Japan refused to have any more dealings with scoundrels like Chiang Kai-shek who "refused Japan's proffered

hand of friendship," and the Japanese Navy initiated a series of outrages against foreigners destined to convince the Chinese that they had nothing to hope from the Westerners. This meant adding a second aim to the first. The war entered another phase. The new purpose was called "bringing China to its knees." Japanese rulers considered they had every right to expect immediate Chinese capitulation, since Japanese troops had long proclaimed their own invincibility.

Then came surprize number two. Chiang Kai-shek and his colleagues not only "refused to be toads"; but the crack troops of the Chinese National Army for three months stood up against a magnificently equipped, though smaller, attacking force and in the end were driven from their positions only by a flanking movement which any trained lieutenant might have forestalled. Militarily this defence of Shanghai to the bitter end was conceivably an error on the part of the *Generalissimo*, who might have done better to keep his best divisions relatively intact. For it was demonstrated that in the absence of competent officers, not even the best Chinese were yet able to stand up and win in pitched battle against a modern army. When the Shanghai defences finally collapsed, China was groggy and total defeat seemed not far away. Yet the effect of the Shanghai defence upon the Chinese soldiers was psychologically magnificent. While foreigners left Shanghai at the turn of the year with the impression that China was finished, inside the country men remembered only that the Japanese were anything but invincible and that in all circumstances, where superior equipment



THE JAPANESE ADVANCE (1)



THE JAPANESE ADVANCE (2)

THE JAPANESE ADVANCE (3)

did not have the decisive word, the Chinese could be a match for them.

Meanwhile Nanking fell almost without defence despite the years of care lavished upon its military preparations. Chiang Kai-shek, thoroughly alarmed, thought of creating a complete void before his adversaries and of retiring far into the hilly west. It was fortunate for China that his German military advisers dissuaded him. For the Chinese people were not yet as thoroughly aroused and steeled for combat as they later became. The immediate evacuation of the middle Yangtse Valley might have broken their faith in Chiang altogether.

Over-confident or over-nervous, the Japanese failed to follow up their advantage. Then, if ever, was the time for taking Hankow by a swift blow and really "bringing China to its knees." The invaders stopped to plunder and dally. Grinning sardonically over this error of Japanese generalship, the German advisers under General Alexander von Falkenhausen were able to persuade Chiang not to go too fast or too far, and to re-establish his headquarters provisionally in the important Wuhan trio of cities, on the railway from Peiping to Canton, at the junction of the River Han with the Yangtse and astride the latter.

Falkenhausen went further: he persuaded Chiang to try a diversion. Instead of retiring with his beaten forces on the Hankow defence line, the *Generalissimo* sent them due north along the Tsinpu Railway, the easternmost of the points of the trident, to where it met the Lunghai crossbar at Suchow. The Japanese

forces were divided into two parts operating independently with no real communication between them. So long as the Chinese were at Suchow, none could be established between the army in the five provinces and the Shanghai Expeditionary Force. Conceivably none was necessary, for each force was strong enough in itself. Had the Shanghai army marched straight on Hankow it might have taken it in short order and divided the Chinese forces. Instead, while the Navy was establishing the semblance of a blockade along the Chinese coast, and seizing the useless island of Amoy, the Japanese Army followed the Chinese to Suchow. This meant withdrawing forces from Shansi and moving the Shanghai army, not westward, but northward. It took time. While the Japanese were concentrating these forces, the Chinese gained the morally important minor victory of Taierhchwang. When Suchow finally fell, the Japanese captured some valuable rolling stock but the main Chinese Army, under the Kwangsi general Li Tsung-yin, escaped on foot eastward from the motorized Japanese and then boldly recrossed the Japanese lines to join the rest of the Chinese forces in a retreat westward along and to the south of the Lunghai railway.

As though hypnotized by their adversary, the exasperated Japanese followed them up closely. The Chinese evacuated Kweiteh, Lanfeng and Kaifeng almost without fighting, but when the now triumphant Japanese reached the strategic spot near Chungmow, stopped them by dynamiting the Yellow River dykes and releasing its flood waters over a vast area.

Meanwhile they had successfully organized guerrilla warfare throughout the entire country, especially behind the Japanese armies and along their lines of communication. Japanese losses were accordingly rising. As estimated by the Chinese, in the first year of warfare they amounted to just over a hundred thousand killed and three hundred thousand wounded, without counting deaths from illness, which were beginning to count. The Chinese had of course lost many times these numbers but considered that they had them to spare. More important to them was the fact that the proportion was slowly improving in their favour. Whereas at the beginning the Chinese lost four and five men to Japan's one, by the second summer the proportion had descended to five to two. Japanese losses in killed only had reached a rate that if continued, would amount to a quarter of a million a year.

During this period of the war Chinese tactics underwent partial modification. The generals still clung to some conception of modern warfare with trench defence of strategic points and an attempt to overcome and wipe out weak Japanese garrisons by quick concentrations. But they began to lay more and more influence on hit-and-run methods reinforced by intensified guerrilla raids. This was described to the writer (June, 1938) by the Chinese chief of staff, General Pai (Pei) Hsung-chi as follows:

"Diametrically opposed to Japan's strategy of quick and decisive battles is our supreme strategy of prolonged and enduring warfare, while in point of war tactics we emphasize mainly mobile fighting and

guerrilla activities. So the capture or fall of a Chinese city, or the victory or defeat in a battle or two, does not have much influence on the war situation. Besides, except for the few points and lines captured, the enemy troops are entirely enveloped by our militiamen and troops who still hold the greater part of the invaded territory. Thus we are engaged in a long drawn-out war of attrition. We are, so to speak, engaged in buying time by yielding space, meaning our territory, and the accumulation of many small victories can amount to one great triumph. We are calmly waiting the opportunity to deal our enemy a decisive and final blow, and what is more, from now on, the chief theatre of war will be shifted from the plains to hilly and swampy places where the efficiency of the Japanese mechanized forces will be much reduced. . . . "

This I took to mean as follows: though the Chinese might have put up a better fight along the Lunghai Railway, they had decided to withdraw from the major communications as well as from the plains and after lengthening the war fronts and the lines of Japanese communications, settle down to a test of military, economic and financial endurance while always hoping for a "diplomatic break" as T. V. Soong put it.

Thwarted in the north by the Yellow River August flood-water, the Japanese still persisted in the idea of breaking the Chinese morale by taking Hankow, and then speedily terminating the war. Once more they assembled their forces and struck. The main advance was along the Yangtse River itself, an obstacle but a precious artery to the army backed by ships.

The north-east fifth or sixth of China, as far south as the Yangtse River, is low. Hankow lies near the south-west corner of the plain. But it is defended against an enemy coming from the north or east by a range of hills beginning at the spur called Lung Shan, a hundred and fifty miles east of Hankow and not far from Anking on the Yangtse, and stretching vaguely north-westward along the border of Hupei Province, crossing the Pinghan Railway at Kikungshan, following over Fu-niu Shan hills in Honan and thence north-west to the Lunghai Railway and rough Shansi. Except for the area north-east of Kikungshan, which is full of rice fields devilishly hard to navigate at any time, and for the narrow gap between Lung Shan Hills and the Yangtse, and for the lake district south of the Yangtse, this is all hilly country. To attack Hankow on such a front, the Japanese needed not less than fifteen divisions. At the same time, they pushed a secondary offensive from Shansi southward, hoping to cross the Yellow River at the bend near Puchow, and cut the Lunghai Railway somewhere around Sian. For Sian lies on the way to Lanchow and it was through Lanchow that the bulk of Russian war material was reaching China along the tremendous caravan route from Turkestan. The seizure of Sian would virtually cut off the main body of Chinese soldiers around Hankow from the communist and other armies in the north-west, since roads through the western hills are few and far between. If the Japanese could advance far enough westward, as far as or beyond the end of the Lunghai Railway, they might even cut off the Russians from the almost isolated province of Szechwan, one of

Chiang Kai-shek's ultimate and presumably impregnable strongholds.

The taking of Hankow was announced by the Japanese in May as "a matter of weeks." The assailants advanced astride the Yangtse. This was not without its inconveniences for the river is a formidable barrier, unspanned by a single bridge along its course. At Hankow, six hundred miles from its mouth, it is well over a mile wide with an average volume of water of a million cubic feet per second (the volume of the Thames at its mouth is twenty-five hundred cubic feet per second). But its very size made it a main traffic artery to the nation possessing the fleet. Despite the loss of many smaller warships and transports, the Japanese took Anking and slowly moved up the river, though impeded by the usual August floods which overflowed the banks for several miles on each side. In the course of the campaign the summer wore away and September found the assailants still a hundred miles from Hankow. Yet with the end of summer the floods subsided. If the Japanese continued their efforts, the ultimate capture of Hankow was, barring surprizes, a foregone conclusion. In July the Chinese Foreign Office followed the Supreme Court and other non-military bodies to Chungking, far up the river, taking most of the Diplomatic Corps with it. Chiang Kai-shek had long since discounted the fall of Hankow and made his preparations accordingly.

In rocky Kwangtung and Kwangsi and Kweichow Chiang's same guerrilla tactics could be terribly effective. A twelve or fifteen hundred mile front stretching north from Indo-China to the desert of

Gobi would severely try the resources of even the mightiest army and Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichow and Shensi provinces were difficult, Yunnan to the extreme south-west, and Szechwan to the west, were really impregnable if defended.

Bring out a physical map of Asia. In the very middle, the gigantic Himalaya lies like a monstrous beetle. Its head is toward the east and within a pair of rugged pincers it embraces a chunk of the Chinese plain—Szechwan Province, fertile, abounding in mineral wealth and with its sixty or seventy million inhabitants capable of becoming a whole country in itself, if properly exploited. Until fairly recent years nothing pierced those pincer-like ranges of mountains that protect, indeed, but at the cost of isolating, this remote section. Nothing, that is, but the irresistible pressure of the Yangtse. Pulling itself tightly together into a torrent only a few hundred yards wide, the great stream literally forces a passage between the pincer tips, dropping over five hundred feet in three hundred and fifty miles, and digging a channel in some places fifteen hundred feet deep and not unlike the Grand Canyon of the Colorado—the Yangtse gorges. Seemingly almost impassible, these gorges nonetheless constitute the gate, and until recently, the only gate to Szechwan and the eastern marches of Tibet. From time immemorial, Chinese boatmen have managed to scrape out a crazy tow-path in the cliffs and, in the course of a few weeks, to drag their sampans up through the wild rapids. Modern steamers make the trip upstream from Hankow, some seven hundred and fifty miles, in about a week, depending on the season, for within the gorges a rise

of a hundred feet in the river level is not unusual after heavy rains or when in late summer the melting Himalaya snow pours down to the plain. Fifty miles above the pincers, at the eastern tip of Szechwan, lies Chungking, the "great city" of Western China, a commercial centre open to foreign trade since 1891, which Chiang had elected as his new capital. A more impregnable stronghold could hardly be conceived.

Japan's answer to this challenge was to follow up the moral and diplomatic collapse of France and Great Britain in the Czechoslovakian affair by throwing caution to the winds, landing a large and carefully prepared Expeditionary Force to the east and west of Hong Kong and, outwitting the Chinese who still trusted somewhat in the protection afforded by British prestige, taking Canton and isolating China from its last adequate port of entry in short order. This happened before the fall of Hankow, whose defence must remain a tribute to Chinese military skill, and brought about Chinese collapse all along the railway to the north. Henceforth Chiang had no alternative to peace but the adoption of exclusively guerrilla tactics. With peace all but excluded the burden of choice once more rested with Japan. To stop with the nominal occupation of most of the eastern half of China, proclaiming that China was defeated, might for a time deceive the Japanese masses. But so long as Chiang's forces remained intact and active, it would mean an acceptance of the Chinese insistence on a war of attrition. From the beginning, the thought of such a war, granted the growing power and hostility

of the Soviets, had been a nightmare to the Japanese leaders. In the almost comical struggle with the Russians for the hill of Chungkufeng, on the Manchurian frontier, the Japanese had finally given in simply because they were up to their ears in China. Therefore, long before the fall of Canton, they began to prepare their people for a third war aim, which they preferred to call, "ruining China." This was plauisble enough, since most of the developed Chinese resources lay to the east of the Canton-Hankow Railway more or less at the mercy of Japan. This entirely suited the Japanese industrialists, who were in a sweat over the recent emergence of Chinese export industries that could cut under the Japanese industries just as the latter were underselling the Western world, namely thanks to cheaper labour. Already the war had cost Japan dear in the shape of lost commercial outlets. From the beginning, the wholesale destruction of Chinese factories had gone along with the systematic bombing of Chinese schools and universities and an intensification of the narcotic campaign. For China was to be reduced economically and intellectually to the status of a full colony.

But could China so easily be ruined? Not without the creation and successful functioning of puppet governments in various parts of China. So long as the Chinese had access to Hong Kong and their sea-borne supplies, the offensive possibilities in their hands made successful economic exploitation of most of the country entirely out of the question. But with the whole eastern half of the country more or less in their hands, the Japanese had

a powerful argument for discouraging Chinese doubters. If the Chinese began to feel Chiang's situation hopeless, they might rally in considerable numbers and for the appropriate consideration, to the Japanese. If, to the contrary, Chiang remained active, his troops well armed and full of ardour, then popular patriotism would continue high and the number of traitors be correspondingly low. Even without the seaboard province, even after the loss of Canton, the Chinese armies remained undestroyed. What could they do, operating from the hills in the more backward part of the country ? This was a question that could best be answered in Europe. It depended upon France and England, the democratic Powers whose territories and predominant influence in the Far East the Japanese were determined to inherit. It depended upon Germany and Italy, Japan's partners in the anti-communist front whose title had been chosen to hide its real nature as "Highwaymen's Alliance." For as the months passed, the original British and French fear of the Japanese diminished rapidly. The British had flatly refused to close Hong Kong to the passage of war material for China. They had co-operated with the Chinese in making the old Burma track from Kunming into a paved highway. The French, originally intimidated by Japan's big talk, were beginning to recover and open their narrow gauge but invaluable Indo-China Railway to the passage of arms of French origin for China. Deprived of Hong Kong, Chiang, once his reserves exhausted, was dependent upon what he could receive via Indo-China, via Burma and via the caravan trail from

Soviet Turkestan. How far would Britain and France go in seeing that he got all he needed especially after their humiliation in Europe? They did not want the Japanese in the south-west: could not that be made the subject for a little bargain between Tokyo on one side, London and Paris on the other? The Japanese could promise not to advance westward of Canton and Hankow if the Western democracies would promise not to feed Chiang with enough arms to allow him to take the offensive or continue his murderous guerrilla warfare throughout the "occupied" territories. Would London and Paris accept? If they aided Chiang, he could carry on to the exhaustion of Japan. Would they aid him? It might depend upon Germany and Italy. And upon Germany too devolved the rôle of preventing the self-confident Russians from gradually increasing their assistance to China to the point where it would amount to an undeclared war. Without the German threat to the Bolsheviks, Tokyo well knew, the Russians would before long have thrown their gigantic weight into the Chinese balance in an effort to finish with Japan once and for all.

And the United States, chief source of Japan's indispensable imports of iron and petroleum and other things like airplanes? How long would an indignant American public permit its manufacturers and merchants to permit an enemy Power to destroy a friend? Would popular outcry eventually compel President Roosevelt to take definite steps in favour of China? A real boycott of Japanese products in the United States, an embargo on certain

American products to Japan, could perhaps let China win. It was endlessly difficult trying to dominate and conquer the world from a couple of two-by-four islands. And it was all very complicated. . . .

IX

MORALE

THE square at Chengtu was buzzing. Perhaps five hundred men, with a sprinkling of women and children, had crowded around a wooden platform facing the square with the green park behind it. Rain had fallen, and the naked ground was oozy with mud puddles, but the crowd sloshed in and out of them with indifference, so attentive they were to what was proceeding on the platform. Voices rose high.

My friend Victor Hu, educated in Paris, attached to the Civil Government of the Province of Szechwan, took my arm and urged me forward. But before we got close enough to see or hear much, the proceedings stopped and instead there went up from the crowd a roar of approval: "Hao, hao! (good, good)," which one may hear in any popular Chinese theatre.

"Too late," said Victor Hu. "We missed the show."

"What was it?"

"It is called *The Death of General Wang Sze-chung at Tientsin*, a well known educational play."

"And who are the players?"

"High school student propagandists. They travel all over the country and by their rather simple spectacles arouse the patriotism of the people and their indignation against the Japanese. There are a good many of these little theatrical troupes."

"What a pity we missed it."

"Wait. We shall see something else."

Foreigners in Chengtu are moderately uncommon: the crowd obligingly parted to allow us places near the platform. A student in his ordinary clothes, the "intensely visible property man" of classical Chinese drama, placed two chairs and a small lateral screen on the platform before a plain curtain. And the play began.

Old John Chinaman, with more whiskers than most of his countrymen can boast of, cloth slippers on his feet, metal water-pipe in his mouth, was seated in his armchair, peacefully enjoying domestic life as his ancestors had done for four thousand years before him. Around him was his family: Young John, a sturdy but timid-looking youth in occidental dress, and three daughters, all pretty girls wearing ordinary modernized Chinese street clothes. But each of the girls wore on her back a label. The first said "Jehol," meaning the northern province; the second read "Peiping," and the third, "The rest of China."

From behind the screen came unpleasant laughter, at which the happy family was only momentarily disturbed. Then a face followed the laughter, a swarthy face with an un-Chinese, Charlie Chaplin-Adolf Hitler moustache. More laughter, self-satisfied, diabolic. And out stepped a sort of Mephistopheles in a kimono: Japan ! Japan seized daughter Jehol and dragged her screaming behind the screen while the old man and his remaining children looked on as if paralysed.

He returned in a moment and repeated the same scene with daughter Peiping, save that there was

some active resistance from Young John. When, however, Japan finally laid hands on "The rest of China," Sonny rolled up his sleeves and, with the assistance of his father and sister, they downed insolent Nippon and proceeded to kick him senseless.

Which ended the play. And the crowd bellowed with delight. The actors, none of whom was over nineteen years, began packing their entire kit into a tiny suitcase, ready to move on. For this was a fraction of the *Theatrical Troupe for the Promotion of Resistance*, organized by the famous *Mass Education Movement* which was founded as far back as 1923 for the purpose of transforming China. All over China, such student players were coming and going. Their aim was well described in a propaganda pamphlet issued by the China Information Committee in Hankow:

"National defence has its invisible as well as its visible aspects. . . . The willingness and ability on the part of the general public to participate in the national defence programme, whenever such participation is called for, constitute the invisible aspect."

The "invisible aspect" soon became the most visible thing in warring China. From Canton to the Yellow River, from Kiu-kiang and Yenan to Lanchowfu and distant Kunming, everywhere travellers reported unceasing propaganda, most of it visual. A nation that still cherishes handwriting as one of the highest arts easily takes to slogans stretched on banners across whole streets. But in addition, there were hundreds and hundreds of wall pictures imparting patriotism and the brutality of the Japanese (some of them so crudely realistic that they made me

start). Every flat surface bore some kind of poster. In addition, portraits of national symbols like Dr. Sun Yat-sen and *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek, who had become the incarnation of Chinese resistance to Japan, peered at one from thousands and thousands of copies. There was not an office, hardly a public place where one was not confronted with something. The artistic quality was generally pretty high: why should it not be, when the finest painters, cartoonists, calligraphers, wood engravers, and photographers had dropped their usual tasks and turned to boosting the national morale?

Patriotic movies were being shown in every city: I saw only one of them and did not feel tempted to see any more. But the effectiveness of the insistence on atrocity towards men, women and children was undoubted. The plays were distinctly better: mostly classical revivals of drama from the heroic period, with Chinese emperors and heroes chasing wicked Coreans and Mongols and Manchus half across the map, or getting beaten and being saved by heroic women who were ready at the drop of the hat to take command of the national armies or to drive a knife into the bowels of a tyrant.

Then for the ears there was the constant appeal of song: nowhere did I ever hear so much patriotic singing as in the various Chinese organizations. The soldiers sang, the women sang, putting into the new war tunes a fervour that their unfamiliarity with the increasingly popular Occidental harmonies distinctly sharpened.

Pamphlets, newspapers, war books, lectures before gigantic audiences, dinned into the people the great

lesson: in the fight for national existence, only the co-operation of all could save China from the unspeakable Japanese whose treatment of Chinese soldiers and women was so uncompromisingly portrayed. To an extent almost incredible to sceptical foreigners, this co-operation was being given.

Obviously the greatest propagandists were the Japanese themselves. Whatever tendency there might have been at the beginning on the part of rich or corrupt Chinese to pact with the invaders, was rapidly dissipated by the crude brutality of the Japanese soldiery and the complacent tolerance of murder, plundering and rape by Japanese officers of presumed culture. Instead of remaining to serve the new masters, large sections of the Chinese population, after a few such object lessons as the scenes that followed the Japanese capture of Nanking, simply moved out with family, bag and baggage. These refugees, uncounted but millions strong, were gradually eased along into the south and west. Each runaway individual became a virulent centre of anti-Japanese feeling.

But an immense amount was being accomplished by deliberate effort. Delicate mandarins, hitherto scornful of the masses, possessed of a philosophic calm that made them superior to mundane events, suddenly felt something new stirring within their silken-clad breasts, something that resembled—strange but incontrovertible !—patriotism of the vulgar. In speaking of the Japanese, their cultivated singsong voices tended to quaver or rise to an unseemly pitch.

One after another, all the existing organizations threw themselves deliberately into propaganda work. The best prepared was the *Mass Education Movement* of Dr. Y. C. James Yen, whom experience as a *Y.M.C.A.* man with the Chinese coolies in France during the World War had made an everlasting friend of the common man. For many years, Yen and his friends centred their efforts on educating the farmers, who comprise at least eighty per cent of China's vast population. They believed that New China could only perpetuate itself and triumph, if it became the faith and outlook of the swarming masses. But China was the centre of world inertia: many of the educated and upper class leaders wanted nothing so little as mass education, fearing that it might create pressure for social and economic reform. Progress was slow until July 7, 1937, date of the "incident" at the Marco Polo Bridge. After that, the *Mass Education Movement* went ahead by leaps, for if China was to resist invasion successfully, it was necessary for the Government to levy huge armies from the masses and to impose suffering upon the entire population. For these armies to fight and these masses to suffer willingly, they had to feel themselves a people. To feel themselves a people, they had to be educated and ultimately to be given a stake in the community.

Dr. Yen organized a *Campaign of Farmers' Education* for *National Defence*, and quickly grouped fifty young people of both sexes into six educational teams. Theatrical Troupes followed; the publication of a *War Series of People's Literature* in simple language that any Chinese can understand; and

finally, the ambitious plan to recruit a hundred thousand educators to train a million men. By this time, the *Mass Education Movement* was but one of several organizations specializing on keeping up the national morale in time of war.

A second, perhaps even more important element in magnetizing the Chinese people and turning their passions against the Japanese, were the Communists. Readers of the books of Edgar Snow and Agnes Smedley are familiar with the details. Whatever their responsibility for the anti-foreign outbreaks of 1925–7, whatever their ultimate political aims and ambitions, there is not the slightest doubt but that communist leaders like Chou En-lai and his friends not only saved the life of the *Generalissimo* when he was kidnapped in 1936, but led all other groups in making China nation-conscious. Foreigners who visited the communist stronghold in Northern Shensi were unanimous in praising their national, social and educational influence. After James Yen, but before the New Life leaders or the "rejuvenated" *Kuomin-tang* group, they taught personal honesty and austerity, cleanliness, decency, patriotism. They annulled ancient debt burdens and divided the lands among the peasants; they saw to it that interest rates of sixty to a hundred-and-twenty per cent vanished. They became an increasing centre of attraction to idealists in Chinese youth. When the war with Japan, which they had long believed inevitable, finally came in their relatively small territory border-ing on the desert of Gobi they became a dynamic centre of resistance to aggression. Dropping their practices of class war and confiscation of land,

pulling the communist emblems from their uniforms, their famous "Red" Army transformed into the Eighth Route Army, accepting faithfully the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, the only human being who could hold China together, they threw themselves into the struggle with almost complete tolerance. A foreign newspaper correspondent at Yenan, the capital of "Red China," was amazed when, at a dinner with a group of Red Army commanders, he was suddenly asked:

"Would you care to say grace?"

As rulers, the Communists favoured the common people; as soldiers, they were among the best, largely owing to the complete trust of the population which supplied them with military information beyond the capacity of less social-minded Chinese leaders to extract; as propagandists, they became acknowledged models. Their "Anti-Japanese University," whose dormitories, like the dwellings of about a third of Yenan's population, were dug in the hillside immune to bombardment, drew no less than twenty-five hundred students, many of whom came on foot from the most remote parts of China. For Yenan is 230 miles north of Sianfu, the capital of Shensi Province, and the journey even by motor-truck over the wretched roads took from three to six days. But no such obstacles could dampen the enthusiasm of New China, whatever its political leanings. Yenan, that part cave, part walled medieval city, became an educational centre of first importance and its value in arousing the Chinese masses against aggression can hardly be exaggerated.

Few in numbers as they were, the Communists unquestionably became national pace-makers.

Last on the scene, but far more extensive and powerful in their scope, came the Governmental Authorities. Once they realized the need for war propaganda, they threw themselves into it with a will, spurred on by the calm determination of the *Generalissimo* and the burning energy of his wife. They speedily enlisted the co-operation of the provincial authorities and set about in a big way making China patriotic. Perhaps the most effective instruments were the army, the *Kuomintang* or ruling Party organization, and the *New Life Movement*.

In a country virtually under military law, where nearly every provincial governor was, or was called, a "general," the army could sway the minds not only of the recruits but of the entire population, especially when working hand in hand with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Publicity.

The working of the ruling Party organization was less visible. But through its numerous ramifications, its somewhat devious affiliations, its ability to steer the secret organizations of which little is said, the *Kuomintang* unquestionably inspired a large section of the youth that was inaccessible to communist or to *New Life Movement* influences.

How important was the *New Life Movement* in galvanizing Chinese resistance to aggressive Nippon? The Chinese themselves do not agree; foreign residents differ widely. To some of the latter, the entire *New Life Movement*, that peculiar mixture of Chinese traditionalism and *Y.M.C.A.* Christianity, was a kind of hoax invented to offset communist influence and take the young people's minds off economic reform. To others, it was the most vital

factor in modern China. Certainly, in so far as it received the personal backing of the *Generalissimo* and his family and the family supporters, it accomplished a good deal. It was a New Life champion, Major-General J. L. Huang, onetime worker in Henry Ford's Detroit plants, who took charge of the distribution of cash bonuses to all the wounded soldiers in China. As Director of what he called the *War Area Service Corps*, he also organized factories for employing refugees, and began teaching patriotic song to the unlettered by means of simple pictures. The cash bonus system unquestionably contributed to maintaining army morale. The Chinese lacked the means to care properly for their wounded. Transport simply could not be spared and gasoline was far too scarce to move many trucks and ambulances had they been available. But by giving a cash bonus of from ten to one hundred Chinese dollars to each wounded soldier, the *Generalissimo* and his helpers took the sufferer's mind off his personal woes and removed some of the sting from military conscription, a new and not always popular innovation in pacifist China.

As for Madame Chiang Kai-shek, by her initiative in looking after refugees, by her activities in a dozen fields, by her incredible vitality and optimism, she proved what an enormous influence in time of crisis a resolute individual can exert on the public mind. For, in travelling through the remoter parts of China, I was almost always asked three questions: Had I been in Hankow? Had I seen the *Generalissimo?* Had I talked with Madame Chiang?

It is difficult to estimate, but foolish to ignore, the importance of women in New China. They are

certainly its most fascinating feature. Fascinating in first instance by their appearance for, without a doubt, they are among the most graceful figures in the world. But beyond this, fascinating by their simple dignity and directness, and a sort of energy that seems to transcend that of the Chinese male. This superior energy was recognized, it seems, by the authors of much of the Chinese classical drama, which is full of amazingly independent ladies who as warriors, statesmen, mothers and wives, often came successfully to the rescue of their less efficient males.

Yet, unquestionably, Chinese society remains preponderantly masculine. A foreigner can live for years among friendly male Chinese without ever meeting the female members of their families, and his feminine acquaintances, if he has any, may easily be confined to a few insipid sing-song girls. How much more delightful those pleasant, gastronomically overwhelming Chinese dinners could be made by the presence of a few seductive educated women ! But in traditional China, the very idea reeks of the immoral Occident.

To Occidentals (and to many Chinese women as well) the Chinese woman seems traditionally to be the object of a veritable oppression. Though not exactly the victim of a harem system, she is almost as dependent as though she were. She goes about unveiled, visits her female friends and relatives, shops in the markets. But as a baby, her feet may have been deformed to the point of permanent lameness; she is supposed to give blind obedience, first to her parents, and then to her often polygamous husband; and had her parents been very poor, she

might have been exposed as a suckling and never grown up at all. The position of the faithful wife-servant in the *Good Earth* may be inspiring, but it is doubtless better to read about than to fill. "Chinese women," one of them wrote me, "were, until recently, oppressed, especially in the more remote provinces."

Some intelligent Chinese and a few foreigners emphatically deny this charge. "The mothers," they say, "are chiefly responsible for the continuation of the ancient system which they would do away with if they found it oppressive. It was not the men but the mothers who bound their baby daughters' feet and threw out excess female children to starve, or later sold them. In no country are the women as powerful as in China. This is a country literally ruled by old ladies."

How explain the contradiction? Modern France demonstrates how important women can be without briefed rights. Can it be that under the old system, when China was virtually without any sort of respectable public life, when the family was the end and measure of all things, that the women were content to rule the country from within doors and through the men; whereas under late circumstances, with private life reduced to an unimportant incident, they were forced more and more into the open in order to see to it that matters proceed to their liking?

In any case the missionaries undoubtedly started a process of change. The students returning from abroad, both male and female, brought home new ideas of female dignity and duty. In many such

student families, particularly in centres like Hong Kong and Shanghai, the social life was, by 1937, not unlike that in Western countries, notably in the United States. Foreign families were received at meals, unmarried girls were going to moving pictures and to parties, sometimes with young men; they dressed like Occidental girls, and their facial make-up and habits and social outlook were very similar. (In fact, a study in the relativity of aesthetic standards could be based on the following contrast: while Negro girls were going to any expense to have the kink taken out of their hair, graceful Chinese women with absolutely straight hair effected a sort of permanent wave that made it distinctly kinky. In both cases, the model was apparently the international movie star.) When married, they continued to claim an emancipation that was still a rare thing in the interior of China. The fact that most Chinese schools and universities were co-educational, unquestionably encouraged change, although the number of women students was much inferior to that of the men. But the fact remains that until very recently the actual status of women remained far behind the theoretical equality they enjoyed in all situations.

It remained for the Japanese invasion to cause a very real and rapid change. Then suddenly a large number of Chinese women awoke to the national needs, and despite opposition from authorities, parents and relatives, set about fulfilling them.

The Chinese were used to feminine influence in high places. At the outbreak of hostilities the country was dominated, some claimed, actually

ruled, by the three Soong girls. As early as August 1, 1937, Madame Chiang founded an *Association of Chinese Women to Support the National Defence*, which ramified into many sections throughout China and abroad. Its members collected money, clothes and medicine, looked after orphan children and refugees and needy families. In May, 1938, Madame Chiang summoned a great meeting of important women from all over China at Kuling, near Kiukiang (later occupied by the Japanese), and extended their activity to the organization of weaving and the stimulation of home industries to increase exports.

In every large town, notably in Canton, girls of good family enrolled in first-aid groups whose members, in addition to helping air raid victims, read to the soldiers and wrote their letters for them. An entire battalion of five hundred Kwangsi girls was actually at the front, fighting under the command of twenty-two year old Miss Tieh-sua, who successfully won her grades in action. I was struck by the numbers of girls visiting the front and singing to the soldiers, the housewives who sewed and mended for them far from the battlefields; I met highly gifted women newspaper reporters in Hankow and Chengtu, visited a training school for refugee student girls just outside Wuchang. Many of the latter had come long distances on foot from their ruined and captured universities or devastated homes, and were living without news of their families. In their plain uniforms and Spartan quarters, they looked the picture of a new determination.

At Hankow, a number of prominent women had the kindness to receive me at tea, at which each of

them outlined her particular work. Most of them were foreign educated, all were experienced and capable. One had been active in the *Mass Education Movement*, another was in charge of a large school, a third worked close to Madame Chiang in her many undertakings, a fourth in the *Y.W.C.A.* But the one with the most to tell was a Communist from Northern Shensi. For to the Chinese Communists, opposition to Japanese aggression and the equality of women were two parts of a single dogma held and practiced like a religion.

They began by giving the right to own property and economic protection to unmarried women. They made the father economically responsible for the children of his divorced wife or wives. Each failure to do so was made a public scandal and utilized for educational purposes. The Communists went in for mass education on an unprecedented scale with as many girls as boys, women as men. Miss Ting-ling, best known of China's women writers, organized the first war service corps for duty at the front. By the end of May, 1938, it had grown to over eight thousand members. There were laundry corps with nearly five thousand laundresses, sewing corps with six thousand seamstresses, a Red Cross corps with eight thousand five hundred nurses, special schools for adults, over ten thousand women in uniformed police work, twenty-five hundred leaders of girls guide under eighteen, thirty-six thousand women organized to till uncultivated fields, reading classes in every village to teach the illiterate the indispensable few hundred characters. In the communist district, the women were actually working under fire, with and beside the

men. The woman who told this story had never been outside of China and spoke no foreign language, whereas her companions were women of the world and returned students mostly of conservative political leanings. But they listened to her with the profound respect paid by the aspiring athlete to the champion. For outside Northern Shensi and the coast cities, feminism, it seemed to the writer, had barely more than touched the cheek of Chinese society.

How shallow a movement women's emancipation yet represented became clear to me at Chengtu, the capital of isolated Szechwan Province, and at Kunming, the capital of remote Yunnan. At Chengtu, as soon as the war started, the "women of advanced ideas" organized an *Association for War Support Against the Enemy*, with numerous sections: for direct aid to soldiers, for propaganda, for nursing, for patriotic singing, and the like. Nine months later, the *Association* managed to send to the front eleven young girls. "To awaken women still lost in their family dream" it began publishing a monthly review, the *Women's Voice*, and tried to organize other associations for common work. But although new organizations sprang up in numbers, the results were small. In other words, much talk and promises and flurry, small results, if one excepted the girl students' military training club. As one remarkably intelligent and politically awakened young woman described the situation for the writer:

"Although there are so many women's associations at Chengtu the results have not developed. The mass of the feminine population is backward and does not yet understand the war or participate in it. This is

due to the lack of leaders and to the force of inertia in these women still under the influence of feudal ideas. But this situation cannot last. The feminist movement is developing from day to day following the extension and duration of the war. In face of the inhuman and barbarous acts of the Japanese (massacres, rapes, burnings), the women of Chengtu have arisen and, like those in the rest of China, are beginning to work hard at the front and behind. There are not only women's service corps, but young girls and women who are taking part in guerrilla warfare. Who can still say that Chinese women are backward? To defend their country and world peace, they are already active in the front line and, brave as the women of Spain, are struggling against aggressors."

Pretty Chu Zho-hwa must have known, for she was born and was living with her parents in Chengtu, and had studied abroad in Japan. New China was transforming Old China, even in Szechwan, but the process had only begun to get under way.

In Yunnan Province this action was moving even more slowly. Yunnan represented all that was traditional in China, and deplored modern ideas. Yunnan protested against the "immoral modern habits" of the girl students who migrated to the Province from the universities of the Chinese sea-board. The Governor of Yunnan, while I was in Kunming, forbade any more modern dancing (quite like a reactionary Western Dictator) and actually prevented Madame King, the wife of one of China's most brilliant technical engineers, from attending the great meeting at Kuling at the invitation of Madame

Chiang Kai-shek. Considering that this meeting was called to promote further women's assistance in winning the war the Governor's action showed a degree of conservatism rarely displayed even in the remote provinces.

Yet even in Yunnan, feminism and nationalism proceeded hand in hand. And since the wave of nationalism was obviously irresistible, since New China was determined to resist the Japanese and transform and modernize the country regardless of expense and suffering, feminism seemed bound to triumph with it. After all, no less than seven thousand strapping young women of Yunnan volunteered for service at the front, and after a long selective process, fifty-five of them actually got there, after a walk of several hundred miles and the militant opposition of their parents. For their motto was: "War is no time to think of our families, sisters ! Join the corps and serve the Army."

Talking with young women like Chu Zho-hwa, reading of women infantry commanders at the front, I had the feeling that once the women were thoroughly aroused, though China might be martyred, occupied and even exploited by the Japanese, it would take a very brave or a very foolish leader to suggest capitulation.

X

E PLURIBUS UNUM

IN 1932 George Sokolsky, advertised by his publishers as "the writer best qualified to know what is happening in China," expressed himself as follows:

"The tale of China's struggle has not been pleasant writing, for the Chinese are individually a lovable people, yet collectively, in the present stage, they produce only the appearance of anarchy" (*The Tinder Box of Asia*, p. 52). And again, (p. 293):

"It must be regarded as axiomatic that for many years to come China will be in a state of revolution and civil war. This civil war has become the normal process by which China is altering her political, economic and social system." And still again (pp. 317–18):

"The constant civil wars in China invite invasion and partition. But the civil wars will continue."

Clearly Mr. Sokolsky expected the coming invasion and attempted partition of China by Japan. China's civil wars did indeed go on for another four years, until the end of 1936, when they abruptly stopped. The first half of the year 1937 was a banner year for China. In the words of the American Commercial Attaché, Julian Arnold:

"China's financial stability was maintained, unification of the currency system advanced; China's credit strengthened by the augmentation of gold

reserves abroad. . . . Rice crop products, cotton and tung (wood) oil were excellent; up to the middle of July the general oulook for trade throughout the country was far more encouraging than at any time for some years past."

What is more important, for the first time in its history, China was able to borrow from the Western world without pledging its shirt.

In 1931 China's chances had also seemed bright, with everything ready for a vast plan of assistance in many fields by the League of Nations. Japan chose that moment to take Manchuria.

In 1936 the last of the warring factions, the Communists, made peace with Chiang Kai-shek. Six months later, Japan struck again. Was it because of civil wars and to bring "order," or for fear lest there be no more "disorder" as pretext for interference that Japan hastened an attack which, owing to the unexpected resistance of China, soon evolved into a full-fledged attempt to conquer the Celestial Republic?

In any case, the Japanese invasion began by producing exactly the effect it was intended to forestall; namely, it united China as the country had not been united for God knows how long. With one exception—Han Fu-chu, the Governor of Shantung, who was hanged by the Chinese—not a single important leader went over to the enemy or rebelled against the absolute leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. The few Chinese who consented to serve the Japanese by acting as members of "provisional" (puppet) governments or as agents for the diffusion of narcotics, the income from which the Japanese used to

help finance the aggression, were of such small reputation that they carried no popular following in their wake. Some of them were assassinated by loyal Chinese with almost breathless speed; others sought the protection, not only of the Japanese conquerors, but of the foreign police in the concessions at Shanghai. It was the unanimous opinion of the foreign residents I met in China that the war had gone further to cement the unity of China than the twenty-five previous years of civil strife.

The loss of cherished provinces, of the new capital, Nanking, hardened the will to resistance. But resistance so patently depended on unity around the person of Chiang Kai-shek, that even those with the least love for the somewhat domineering leader publicly professed a hundred per cent loyalty to him. Nor must it be forgotten that inevitably the war process brought into places of authority more and more of the Western trained, anti-traditionalist, Chinese technicians who formed the kernel of the nationalist movement.

In 1932 Mr. Sokolsky could close his book with the statement: "Chiang Kai-shek almost alone has grasped the essential struggle in China: it is between nationalism and communism" (*The Tinder Box of Asia*, p. 347). Obviously he did not foresee that in 1935 Stalin and Dimitroff would swing the Communist Internationale squarely behind democratic, nationalist movements wherever communist cooperation was acceptable, that a communist reconciliation with Chiang would be 1936's Christmas present to China, or that Communists and conservative *Kuomintang* leaders would fight side by side.

against the Japanese, under Chiang Kai-shek, with small apparent friction. At Hankow, in June, 1938, Chou En-lai, communist vice-director of the Political Department of the powerful Military Council, solemnly assured me, not only that the Communists were fighting against Japan with their entire strength (a fact known to every Chinese school child), but that they were receiving complete co-operation and fair treatment from Chiang himself, according to the unwritten pact of Sian.

Everywhere I went, staunch partisans and former opponents of Chinese unity under the *Generalissimo* went out of their way to convince me of their complete co-operation with the man who had become the undisputed symbol of national resistance to Japan. The merest suspicion of willingness to pact with the invaders, the veriest hint of willingness to break the national unity, was the foulest charge that could be flung at a Chinese general or politician or bureaucrat.

At Chengtu, I was waited upon by Bulson Chang, secretary and translator to "Marshal" Yen Shi-shan, former "model governor" of Shansi Province, and then head of the Pacification Commission of the same region, who was suspected of "too great immobility."

Bulson Chang was, he informed me, a Christian who told no lies. "Marshal" Yen had, it appeared, been much disturbed by a broadcast made by a Chinese in Peiping who had come from Shansi, accusing the Chinese leader of having negotiated with the Japanese for a separate peace. This rumour had been repeated in the foreign press. Would I not deny it? To test the solidity of the request, I myself wrote the text of a denial and made it as water-tight

as a newspaper man can. If the "Marshal" would sign such a repudiation I would, I said, be glad to publish it. Days passed and no answer came from the "Marshal's" headquarters at Sian. I returned to Europe. But hardly had I reached Paris when I received a message. It read simply. "O.K. Bulson."

Foreigners in Szechwan and Yunnan insisted on the fact that the members of the former "separatist" or "autonomous" régimes were remaining in power in both provinces. How could such people have "changed their minds" so suddenly? Kwangtung Province itself was showing a perplexing stubbornness in holding out for its financial privileges. After all, what were the provinces of Yunnan, Kwangsi and Kwangtung still doing with currencies of their own? The natives of Kunming showed a decided preference for Yunnan dollars as against national or "Shanghai" dollars. Why should Yunnan possess its own Foreign Office? Yet I could not doubt the sincerity of Yun T. Miao, industrial magnate and financial adviser to the Government of Yunnan, who assured me of the absolute loyalty of the province to Chiang Kai-shek and defied me to mention a single national law or edict which Yunnan was not applying, though sometimes slowly and with seeming reluctance.

Clearly, China's unity was too new to inspire full confidence even to Chiang himself. It was not merely as a reserve against possible future isolation from the outside world that the *Generalissimo* had piled up vast reserves of war material in safe places known best to himself. He intended to keep the national régime as safe internally as it was proving adamant

against the Japanese. But among the foreigners in Hankow, there was none who believed Chiang would have to use his reserves other than against the foreign invaders. Unquestionably, certain people in Szechwan and Yunnan were none too happy about the probability of a thoroughly united China nor enjoying the prospect of being run over by Chiang's army. Nor were all the foreigners in these outlying provinces, many of whom had had small contact with New China, convinced that such was virtually inevitable.

With one of these sceptical foreigners I had the following conversation:

He: What makes you think that Yunnan autonomy is virtually over?

I: What do you think? To me one of the following alternatives seems almost sure: either Chiang defeats the Japanese; or Chiang loses Hankow and has to retreat into these remote mountainous provinces. In the former case, he is left with such power and prestige that Yunnan and Szechwan will never dare even to try to oppose his victorious army; in the latter, his very numerous retreating soldiers will simply swarm all over the place and be in no mood to stand for any nonsense. In either case, local autonomy is gone. For China is bigger than Yunnan or Szechwan or both together.

He: What makes you think Chiang will not prefer to fall back upon Lanchow on the caravan trail to Russia?

I: My own common sense. That would mean his becoming the tool of Moscow whereas to-day he is Moscow's independent ally. His own sense of self-preservation and his dislike of communism will cause

him to choose Chungking, Chengtu and Kunming as his new centres, if he loses Hankow.

He: You may be right so long as Chiang is in power.

I: Do you see any one in China who can drive him out of power or who wants to, for that matter?

He: Chiang is not invulnerable. The loss of Hankow may shake China, even the New China you apparently believe in, to its foundations. After that, the landlords and bankers and merchants of the occupied territory, who have often sold out their country in the past, may decide that further resistance is hopeless and co-operate with the Japanese. Or the farmer boys in the army may get sick of dying for a Government that does so little for them, and simply desert *en masse*.

I: So far as I could see from my contact with the farmer soldiers, they are not fighting for love of Chiang, though they trust him, but from hatred of the Japanese and love of something we call China.

He: Then you exclude the fall of Chiang?

I: I do not know enough about Chinese affairs to exclude anything. But Chiang Kai-shek seems to me to enjoy a reputation and an authority in this country such as I have rarely seen given to a man. He has a more sincere following than Hitler or Mussolini; his position resembles that of Pilsudski or Kemal Ataturk, or at least that of Clemenceau in France during the latter part of the World War. So long as, like Clemenceau, he answers all questions about his intentions and activities with the single phrase, "I am making war!" his position seems very strong. But suppose he did fall, what then?

He: Then the secret ambitions of some in Szechwan and Yunnan might be realized. Cannot you imagine a South-western Confederation of Chinese Provinces being formed out of Kwangsi, Kweichow, Yunnan and Szechwan ?

I: Only as a basis for further war; and under Chiang Kai-shek.

He: No. I meant as something permanent.

I: And leave the Japs to stay in the north and in the Yangtse Valley ?

He: Precisely.

I: And who would take responsibility for such an ignominious arrangement ?

He: Who but your friend Pai (Pei) Hsung-chi, the Kwangsi general ? After all, in 1936 he was fighting against Chiang Kai-shek.

I: Because Chiang would not resist the Japanese and Pai wanted to. Of all the Chinese leaders I met, Pai, after Chiang, impressed me the most. I simply cannot see him doing anything like that.

He: Suppose China collapsed ? Suppose it were the best he could get ? Suppose the independence of the South-western Confederation were guaranteed by France and Great Britain ? What then ?

I: Can you see public opinion in England and France permitting their Governments to connive at the dismemberment of China ?

He: It would not be put like that. They would be told they were saving the remnant of Chinese independence as the nucleus of some future China. France and Great Britain would then arm, train, and, if necessary, co-operate with the soldiers of the Confederation in defending it and putting a limit to

the southern march of the Japanese. Such an idea might obtain the support of the Western business men.

I: Why should they support such a pitiful "rump" when they refuse help to a China that is virtually intact?

He: You are innocent of the colonial mentality. An intact victorious China could thumb its nose at foreign business, the "rump" would have to purchase its independence by handing over its economic riches for exploitation to the foreigners. Have you not heard of a British scheme to build a railway connecting Yunnan with the Burma system?

I: I see. France to get the tungsten; the British in the Tin Pool to get the tin; perhaps an international consortium for opening communications and exploiting the almost untouched and reputedly fabulous resources of Szechwan, under threat of abandonment to the Japanese if the natives didn't like the arrangement. A pretty scheme, but I doubt if it can succeed.

He: What obstacles do you see?

I: In the first place, Chiang will probably not fall.

He: But he might be killed, or succumb to illness.

I: Obviously. But even then, what you suggest could not, I believe, occur so long as the average intelligent Chinese was not convinced that Japan had won the war. To-day he is convinced that China is winning it. So long as this conviction holds, not Pai Hsung-chi, not the *Generalissimo* himself, could consent to what would be called a dishonourable peace.

He: I have not been out of this province since the war started. Surely you are overstating.

I: Not at all. So far as I can learn, Chiang Kai-shek helped make the rising wave of nationalism.

But to-day it is the rising wave that is making Chiang. Businessman, mandarin, or general, with popular feeling running as high as it does at present, he would be a brave man or a lunatic who would try to deliver China to Japan. For I would not give two cents for his life. His own soldiers, his wife, his servant, some student, would murder him. And the war against Japan would go on. For either I am an old shoe as well as an old newspaper man, or China has been deeply bitten by the microbe of nationalism. The Nineteenth Century and the early Twentieth Century witnessed this thing in one nation after another: Italy, Germany, Bulgaria, Roumania, Serbia, the South American countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic States. It is starting to-day in the Ukraine. My point is that there is no case where, once it has taken hold, this microbe has been eliminated by oppression or violence. If the analogy holds here, Chinese nationalism could survive even a Japanese victory or a renewal of Chinese civil war. But China is to-day united as never before and there are no signs of dissension. And without actual civil strife among the Chinese, Japan, it would seem, has only a reasonable chance of beating China. In any case the creation of New China will continue.

He: Anyway, we agree that the China of the future will be in the south and west, only you imagine this as a nucleus of future growth, I, as the last remnant of a decadent empire.

And here the conversation ended.

XI

THE IMPREGNABLE SOUTH-WEST

"WHY should we worry about loss of territory when we have all Asia to retire into ?"

The speaker was General Chen Cheng, Head of the Military Council of China, Military Governor of Hupei Province, and reputed choice of Chiang Kai-shek as his successor in case "anything should happen." Important people were hard to locate in the Wuhan trio of cities astraddle the Yangtse. My original appointment with the General was in Hankow; then it was shifted across the Yangtse to Wuchang, but upon arriving there at ten on a hot June evening, I was abruptly sent back to Hankow. It was nearly midnight before we met in a charmingly furnished reception room not far from the Ministry of Publicity. All Chinese males are timeless in appearance between the ages of eighteen and fifty, but the General looked young even for China. After we had been served those cups of pure hot water which even the nerveless Chinese, under the war strain, had begun to substitute for stimulating tea, the conversation began. General Chen Cheng was apparently more politically minded and cautious than his colleague General Pai Hsung-chi, the Kwangsi chief-of-staff, but he agreed with him as to the number of Japanese involved in the China war.

"In the eleven months the war has lasted," he said,

using an interpreter, though I suspected he spoke excellent English, "the Japanese have called upon nearly a million and a half men. They are using some thirty divisions. These divisions have been reinforced to a strength of thirty-four thousand men each. Add the replacements of the casualties and the sick, and you reach the figure I stated. No one can hold China with a million men, not as long as we keep on fighting. Our producton of war material is steadily increasing. In addition to small arms in abundance, we now produce some artillery and within a short time will be making airplanes."

Now, excessive verbalization, the mistaking of words and plans for reality, is a Chinese weakness. Yet when I expressed a mild doubt as to whether the "rump" China left by the taking of Hankow would suffice as a basis to carry on the war, the General smiled with confidence.

"Go into the South-west and see for yourself," he said.

The term South-west means in China the four provinces of Kwangsi, Kweichow, Yunnan, and Szechwan, with the possible addition of the big southern coastal province of Kwangtung whose capital is Canton, in which the British colony of Hong Kong lies like a rough emerald in a red gold setting. Without a declaration of war, the British at Hong Kong saw no reason to close their port to the passage of food and war materials for China. The Japanese had, therefore, either to declare war on China and thereby cease to obtain any further supplies of war material from the United States under the application of the American neutrality

legislation; or to conquer Hong Kong; or to intimidate the British into closing the port as they had partially intimidated the French in Indo-China farther south; or to land a new Expeditionary Force in southern China and cut the railroad somewhere north of Hong Kong territory; or to take Hankow and proceed five hundred miles southward along the railroad until they occupied it all as far as the giant city of Canton. They chose the two last courses.

Now, the Chinese are always incalculable and often inefficient, but none can call them improvident. Months in advance they foresaw and discounted a Japanese occupation of Hankow. In August, 1937, the National Resources Commission set up by the *Generalissimo* as his personal organ to supersede the National Bureau of Economic Research founded by T. V. Soong, proceeded to begin moving as much of the industry as possible from the vulnerable coastal area around Shanghai where most of it was located, into the remote interior. As the Japanese advanced, one Chinese resettlement plan followed another. The first had picked upon the provinces of Hupei and Hunan as the best site. Japanese military pressure on Hupei spoiled this. The next foresaw the location of at least fifty per cent of the transferred factories into remote Szechwan, deemed inaccessible. But Szechwan turned out to be too inaccessible, being reached only by the Yangtse River and by one uncompleted highway over high mountains from Changsha, on the Hankow-Hong Kong Railroad. Highway and open river terminated at Chungking, in the extreme eastern part of Szechwan, and behind

Chungking was but one decent road, the stone-bedded but choppy highway to Chengtu, capital of the province. A Japanese occupation of Changsha, by no means out of the question, would mean that industry located in Szechwan was virtually marooned there and its products could not easily be distributed through the other inaccessible provinces, Kwangsi, Kweichow, and Yunnan, which the Government had every reason to believe it could hold. Therefore, a revised or third plan provided for scattering factories over the entire "rump" China.

This was done. At least one hundred and fifty larger factories were moved bodily. 15,000 tons of machinery reached Chungking by small boats and were landed and carried up those three hundred pitiless steps to the city by tireless coolies. Since it did not care particularly about having the re-established factories bombed, the Government was cagey about giving precise information concerning their new location.

With the transfer of the industry to the west and south-west, the stage was all set for a new war development. Szechwan had long been known to be among the richest parts of China. The construction of a railroad had even been begun between Chungking and Chengtu, and then abandoned. The province had set up a plan of economical development before the Japanese invasion, when Szechwan, under "Marshal" Liu-Siang, was still reluctant to admit itself an integral portion of the Chinese Republic of Nanking. A couple of model farms were actually started. But the Szechwanese are an easy going lot. Though their plan for the economic reconstruction

of the province included just about everything, not very much was actually accomplished until the Japanese invasion shifted the national centre of gravity.

For, along with the migration of Chinese factories went a wholesale transfer of Governmental offices and institutions and, what was perhaps even more important, of whole universities. The systematic bombing and destruction of any number of Chinese educational institutions doubtless, in Japanese eyes, went along with the forcible doping of the population with narcotics. Just as in subjugated Korea, the Chinese were to be deprived of learning, health and will power, in order to make them docile slaves of their Nipponese masters. Quite aside from the fact that the Chinese are not Koreans, the destruction and driving out of the educational institutions was conceivably of immense benefit to China. The number of universities, colleges and professional schools was inevitably reduced, but those that remained emigrated to the territories of the west and south, where they brought the impact of a new spirit, thereby preparing the way for the rapid development of the backward provinces. Professors and students submitted to the greatest privations rather than let the light of learning go out in China. Young men walked hundreds and hundreds of miles from the big centres, girls were sent out of the country and then back in again by the French Railway, in order to reach remote Yunnan, where their new-fangled ways caused a wholesome scandal among the ultra-conservatives, to whom opium smoking was a harmless pastime compared with destructive vices

like modern dancing and rouging the lips. The newcomers, Government employees and academic devotees, set to work. A single exile like D. K. Lieu, Member of the National Resources Commission, Director of the Bureau of Economic Research, and Member of the Military Council, was a dynamo, for he brought with him a well trained mind with an immense respect for facts.

Kweichow and Kwangsi are rough country, producing good soldiers and offering fine opportunity for resisting the Japanese. But from the Chinese viewpoint they are sparsely inhabited, with less than thirty million people between them. Their resources are not large. Yunnan had the advantage of even greater remoteness and considerable wealth of valuable minerals, notably tungsten and tin. Kwangsi and Yunnan shared the advantage of lying contiguous to French Indo-China, with a railway outlet to the sea through the neutral port of Haiphong. The shorter branch of this narrow-guage line entered Kwangsi at Lanson and after a forty mile continuation, stopped abruptly. But it was prolonged by a highway to Nanking and Changsha to the east, and to Kweiyang in Kweichow, and to Chungking in Szechwan. The longer westerly branch terminated at Kunming, capital of Yunnan, where a somewhat roundabout highway led to the Changsha-Chungking road. The Japs might, by a miracle, get into Kwangsi and Kweichow Provinces, but that they could reach Kunming was beyond legitimate imagining. The cutting of the Hong Kong port of entry could not mean complete isolation from the sea unless the French closed their railway to Chinese traffic under

Japanese threat of occupying the Chinese Island of Hainan lying off the coast of Indo-China. Such a threat was actually made. In the first year of the Sino-Japanese war, the French allowed very little war material to enter China over their precious railway, and that only of French manufacture, under the pretext that it had all "been ordered" before hostilities started. Fearful of further French connivance with Japan, which was what the French tactics amounted to, the Chinese and the British began paving the ancient caravan trail from Yunnan across the mountains westward to Burma, and by September, 1938, it was virtually completed.

"Rump" China was thus, under all circumstances, in possession of two sure lines of communication with the outside world, the Burma road in the south-west, and the trail to Russia from Lanchow in the north-west, long indeed but inaccessible to the Japanese. Most of the Government offices were transplanted from Hankow to one or other of the western cities and the economic and cultural development of the Rump, as a base for a "permanent" war with Japan, could begin.

Kwangsi was producing some tin and an excess of rice. The Yunnan tin production could be increased to a fourth of the normal world demand. Tungsten and antimony are both abundant and there was some copper production. But the Golconda of "Rump" China, relatively untapped but supreme in fertility, mineral wealth, and potential water power, was Szechwan, on whose effective development the viability of "Rump" China, in last analysis, was

bound to turn. In the course of my visit to Chungking and Chengtu, I obtained from General Ho Kwo-kwang and D. K. Lieu at Chungking, and from the Szechwan Reconstruction Commission at Chengtu, the following data:

Agriculturally, Szechwan is incredibly fertile. It produces two and more crops a year. The rice yield is about ten per cent above the Chinese average and greater than the dense local population can consume. Szechwan produces a vast amount of wood (tung) oil, practically all of which, in normal times, is available for export. The orange crop is large and of good quality. The silk production is splendid. A real boycott on Japanese silk in the Western world could automatically make a place for Szechwan silks, both raw and woven. The Chinese Foreign Trade Commission undertook to sell a certain amount of Szechwan silk on its own responsibility. I never saw finer material for shirtings. There is some cotton and tobacco and sugar cane. There is also an excellent hard wood called *nan-moo* which is amazingly cheap and makes first-class railway ties. There are plans for the opening of several cotton mills at Peipei near Chungking. The live stock of Szechwan amounted in 1937 to about 4.5 million pigs, a quarter of a million cattle, 320 thousand water buffaloes, 435 thousand goats, fifty thousand sheep. The production of hides and pig bristles is large. The suppression of opium cultivation, if carried out anything like as thoroughly as promised, could greatly increase the amount of all other products available. John Lossing Buck, greatest expert on Chinese agriculture, laid down early in the war a set of slogans for all

China which, if applied in Szechwan alone, would go far toward making Rump China independent of agricultural imports. These were: (1) plant crops producing most food; (2) decrease area in non-food crops; (3) cultivate new land; (4) grow more winter crops (not applicable to Szechwan where they already existed); (5) fertilize crops heavily; (6) use more organic matter; (7) cultivate crops better; (8) control crop insects and diseases; (9) drain lands properly; (10) protect and strengthen dykes; (11) irrigate more land; (12) use more water in irrigating; (13) give better care to store crops; (14) protect your live stock from infection; (15) grow more vegetables; (16) save food by eating unpolished rice and coarse flour; (17) eat more potatoes, corn (maize), soya beans, squash and vegetables in place of rice and flour; (18) drink less wine; (19) smoke less tobacco; (20) smoke no opium; (21) serve less food at dinner parties; (22) postpone purchases of new clothes and bedding.

Szechwan mineral wealth is even more striking. There are fairly large deposits of iron and copper and coal, some zinc and nickel. Forty thousand ounces of gold annually are mined or taken from the rivers—not much, but easily doubled with more modern methods. The salt domes of the province are famous, and if exploited, capable of supplying the normal needs of all China. Near the salt domes are petroleum deposits. Borings were made in two places, at Tseliuching near the salt domes, and at Shiyukow near Chungking, with fair results.

A cement plant at Chungking, an acid factory at Peipei, and numerous power plants completed the

picture. Any amount of still available water power could be obtained.

Granted two or three short railroads or some other decent means of communication, and Szechwan could become an economic stronghold of the highest importance. To build these quickly New China, according to the Chinese, needed not only more initiative than vouchsafed before, but probably foreign capital. During my trip, I learned that several European groups were immediately willing to buy in on the tin mines of Yunnan, but that the Americans, preferred by the Yunnanites, were curiously shy of investment. Foreigners seemed increasingly interested in helping to develop Szechwan; the risk of seizure by the Japanese seemed, in view of the country's remoteness and isolation, small indeed. In Yunnan I had seen a German representative of Krupp, interested in the tin and an American mining engineer in the employ of the Chinese tin owners who was doing his best to attract the attention of American statesmen. For Yunnan tin offered an all but impregnable supply of this precious metal to a maritime nation in case of war. . . . At Kunming I ran across the traces of a representative of the French armament firm of Scheider-Creusot. Obviously the Chinese west was becoming of increasing interest to the Occidental world. Why?

Obviously because the Japanese had fallen far short of expectations in a military way. Their strategy was defective, their tactics outworn. Only their material was good and their courage constant. By their military insolence, the shooting of their "friend," the British Ambassador, Sir Hughe Montgomery

Knatchbull-Hugessen, their bombing of the American gunboat Panay, they had brought about the possibility of an Anglo-American combination against them in the Pacific they were obviously far too weak to face. By refusing to limit their military operations against China to a reasonable area, they were playing into the hands of Soviet Russia. Unquestionably they were exhausting themselves economically at the same time, and were in danger of failing, not only in some future war with Russia, but in their attempt to break the will of China.

For the Chinese had surprised every one. Less, to be sure, by their ability as sheer fighters. No, the Chinese had surprised the world by their failure to succumb to certain weaknesses reported traditional, incompetence in the leaders, venality, lack of popular morale and patriotism, failure to show team work. The China of 1938 was overcoming them all to an increasing degree and despite the depth of Japanese military penetration, was stronger than at the beginning of the war a year before.

In consequence, the foreigners were no longer afraid of Japan and beginning to reckon with the possibility of a successful China with which one had better be on good terms. . . .

XII

MEDITATION WHILE FLYING TO CHENGTU

I STOOD on the landing field of the airport at Chungking and looked at the conveyance that was to take me to Chengtu. Two hundred miles and more in that thing! It might have been built by the Wright Brothers.

"After all," I reasoned, "it goes back and forth on this line fairly regularly and nothing has happened yet."

On closer observation the thing looked more like a gigantic box-kite. "And the Chinese have always been experts at flying kites."

Reassurance was feeble. And then a miracle happened. Out of the sky came the drone of ultra-powerful motors and a few seconds later a modern monoplane dropped on to the field and out stepped two tall men in white ducks.

"Eating again," I heard one of them say to the other in a slow mocking tone. "Say, if you were to miss a meal you wouldn't have strength enough to lift the oil-can."

Fellow Americans, without the shadow of a doubt. Incredible to find them here. The sequence was even more theatrical. Chinese soldiers appeared and surrounded the 'plane. And from a shed came a row of coolies each carrying on his shoulder a sort of cubic

parcel, under the weight of which he staggered. Now the average hundred pound coolie can sling a grand piano to each end of his bamboo pole and walk away without a tremor. A parcel as small as that which caused him to sway could contain only one thing that was likely to be transported by air. Some of the square packages were stowed away in the baggage compartment of the big three-motor machine and the rest were placed carefully on the floor, one between each two passenger seats. When the load was complete a single Chinese in a grey robe entered the 'plane. Here was my chance. I approached the pilot:

"Might I ask where you are going?"

"Chengtu."

"Is there any chance of a lift? I have a ticket for the other 'plane over there, but somehow I seem to prefer yours."

"Oh, you do? An American?"

"Yes. Newspaper man."

"O.K. As I don't see any other passengers, you might as well come along with us. Just tell those boys to move your stuff out of the other crate into this one."

In five minutes I was settled comfortably back in a cushioned front seat, the silent Chinese and I alone with those heavy packages. With a roar the big machine rose from the mudflat field and pointed to the east.

This airplane belonged to the Bank of China. It was carrying gold. During the past month it had brought as much as thirty five million dollars of the precious stuff from Hankow. From Chengtu the

gold went on to Lanchow by air. I did not myself visit Lanchow, the great Russian base, at the eastern end of the longest line of military communications in the world. There was too little to be seen: an airplane assembly station, a rather small base of war supplies—these are meagre sights to justify the long trip by air and road from Hankow. And to reach Soviet territory takes the fleet of Russian trucks days and even weeks. Clearly so long as Hong Kong remained in touch with China, that and not Lanchow, would be China's greatest entrance for war supplies, regardless of their origin. And, for the time being at least, the means of payment was being found.

For how long? From the beginning of the war it was clear that this might eventually become China's major problem. At Hong Kong I had heard fears expressed lest China's available supply of metal, mostly silver deposited abroad, would soon peter out. How could it be otherwise with the balance of payments obviously unfavourable? China normally imports food. In prosperous times, before the war, China's unfavourable trade balance was compensated by large and steady remittances from the thousands and thousands of well-to-do Chinese living abroad. During the war, despite the patriotism of the expatriate Chinese, these remittances began to run thin or to be sent, not to wealthy Canton, but to British Hong Kong, in whose damp but relatively secure premises a number of wealthy Chinese had taken to living. To compensate for this loss China could reduce its imports; increase its exports; reduce its payments to foreign creditors; render difficult any

conceivable flight of Chinese capital; obtain credits or loans abroad.

None of these was easy. The Japanese occupation of so much of the Chinese coast and territory might have brought about a reduction of imports. But only if the Chinese Government would cast off these territories financially by ceasing to supply them with currency. And Chinese national unity was too new and fragile a thing to encourage subjection to such a strain on loyalty, to say nothing of foreign objections. Moreover the control of imports was rendered singularly difficult by the presence of Foreign Concessions in so many places. Merchandise could be brought to these Concessions by foreigners, duty free, and from there it was relatively easy matter to smuggle it into China proper.

Nor did the increase of exports seem much easier. The greatest obstacle was the continuance of the world depression, particularly in the United States, the consumer of most of China's principal export, wood-oil, an essential to modern paint. But the loss of Shanghai, site of no less than fifty per cent of China's modern industry, was a hard blow. The loss of Shantung gave over to the Japanese the greatest silk producing province, though for years the Chinese silk production had been undercut by the thrifty Japanese. There remained the possibility of reducing the payments to foreign creditors, most of them British, but even including some Japanese. Any other country in the circumstances of invaded China would have declared a complete moratorium. But China was still something of a colonial country and its last hope might lie in keeping the confidence of

foreigners. Therefore, the foreign payments must be made so long as it was humanly possible.

Stopping the flight of Chinese capital abroad was not so difficult. To obtain new private loans from abroad was just about impossible so long as the foreigners had not come to believe in an ultimate Chinese victory. Any substantial new credits had to be "political"—that is, given or guaranteed by a Government. Exact information on this subject was difficult to obtain at Hankow; inquiries evoked the impression that something had been given by Russia (I do not speak of commodity exchanges of the type China made with Germany and Czechoslovakia nor of the real credits obtained abroad just before the war started), a trifle by France, a trickle by British interests and nothing by the United States. How then keep up the river of war material necessary to equip China's millions of soldiers at full volume?

That the balance of payments was unfavourable was shown by the June, 1938, slump in the value of the Chinese dollar. In Hong Kong and Hankow I was assured in May that the already emaciated dollar would henceforth be held stable. And then it slumped again. There were rumours of sharp altercations between the Descendant of Confucius in the Ministry of Finances and his fiery brother-in-law, T. V. Soong, of the Bank of Canton, precisely over this slump. But I had it on good authority that henceforth the currency could be kept at its level, some forty-five per cent below its value at the beginning of the war. Well, may be. But how hold the currency stable with an unfavourable balance of payments?

How, that is, unless the Chinese could cut themselves completely off from the world like Germany and Italy, and support their money on police force, with the penalty of decapitation for currency smugglers or speculators? Decapitation might prove possible. But what was the good of that in one portion of China if in the regions occupied by the Japanese and in Shanghai and the other incredibly numerous Foreign Concessions, the Chinese currency must continue to circulate?

There was no way to escape the conclusion: To save the financial and economic situation China ought immediately to cast off responsibility for occupied China, stamp its notes and refuse to accept unstamped ones, and clamp down a moratorium on all former obligations abroad. The results: a howl going up from the important British business interests centred in Hong Kong and Shanghai and powerful enough even in London to swing the wobbly British Cabinet, filling the economic newspapers of the world with tales of inherent Chinese dishonesty and ruining what chance there might ultimately be for China to obtain real private or governmental credits in some awakened democracy abroad—just as if Britain was not defaulting on its debts to the United States in a period of relative British prosperity! But Britain, being a great empire living on accumulated moral, political and financial capital could afford to be—shall we say, self-righteous? And New China, a still tiny growth in the midst of an ancient decay, could not. There was nothing for China to do but struggle along with expedients. To find suitable ones was the task of

T. V. Soong, China's richest banker, for Finance Minister Dr. H. H. Kung, for Arthur Young, the American financial adviser, and for Cyril Rogers of the Bank of England. But the British Prime Minister had just refused Rogers a loan for the purpose of stabilizing the Chinese currency. Would the British lend money on a new railway concession in Yunnan or on the Yunnan tin?

What else could China do? I might ask the Bank of China representative across the aisle. He was sleeping among his cubes of gold. That wasn't prudent: how did he know I wouldn't profit by his slumber to pitch one package overboard to some confederate waiting down below on one of those unbelievable plum-coloured mountains of Central Szechwan (if I could lift it)? I must wake him up and warn him of the danger as well as asking a question or two. All to no purpose. Even awake he spoke nothing that I could understand, for my knowledge of Chinese was limited to the ability to choose between tea and hot water as a society drink. Unconscious of my sinister imaginings, the Chinese slumped lower into his grey robe and snored again.

Well, China could reduce its imports. By making the consumption of unpolished rice obligatory it could cut down its imports of food stuffs by a certain important percentage. This problem was already urgent in over-populated Kwangtung Province. China could cut the imports of foreign manufactured goods to the bare minimum of machinery and war supplies. With the Japanese occupying most of the cotton-growing provinces, China must dress itself in the simplest way. Handsome and active Madame Chiang

Kai-shek was already busy with the problem. She was arranging for the purchase of seventy thousand hand-looms to give employment to refugee women. As a beginning. And within a year she promised a nation of formerly silken-clad women dressed uniformly in the simplest cotton goods.

That was the way. The marvellous silks of Szechwan, almost unknown in the world, could be collected and exported, if necessary at a financial sacrifice. Wood-oil sales would revive if and when American prosperity returned. The tin production of Yunnan could quickly be doubled or tripled in defiance of or in co-operation with the powerful International Tin Committee, with its price fixing and urge toward world monopoly.

Japan, too, was unhappy and without credit. A poor nation lodging an eighteen-foot anaconda's appetite in the body of a five-foot blacksnake. From July, 1937, until April, 1938, the war was estimated to have cost the Japanese four hundred million yen a month, or forty per cent of the national income. In 1918, at the height of the war strain, the United States was spending only a quarter of its national income. Already the island Imperialists were forced into totalitarian control and complete economic mobilization. Half of the gold reserve had already evaporated. Just to conquer fat flabby China. Yet this was the nation that dreamed of beating the gigantic soviet Empire and wresting control of the Pacific from the United States, France and Great Britain ! Probably a British and American embargo on certain supplies, a further boycott of Japanese goods, could break Japan within a year. Why

should not the American Government give China a loan for the purchase of oil, food and cotton for the suffering civilians? That at least would be no violation of its "neutrality". . . .

Five thousand feet below, the deep purply hills suddenly gave place to vast pale green rice-fields and the plain of Szechwan spread before my eyes, beautiful, potentially as rich as all Japan, but backward, medieval, full of autonomous longings and dulled with opium. . . .

Could China hold out financially and economically at least for another year that might bring a diplomatic "break" in China's favour? (As the 'plane slowed down and dropped on to the field at Chengtu, the sleeping Chinese awoke with a start and looked around at his precious consignment.)

The answer seemed to be clear: in last analysis China's problems all boiled down to a moral problem. A renascent nation of over four hundred million could do almost anything, provided it had the guts to suffer, the patriotism to hold on and the leadership to trust. The rest was technical, secondary, relatively simple.

XIII

DIALOGUE WITH MY CONSCIENCE

Which may be omitted by the uninterested.

THE single gas-driven "Micheline" car which, jolting and swerving on its rubber tyres over the narrow-gauge rails, brings the traveller in a single day from Kunming on the highlands of Yunnan down to swampy Laokai on the border of Indo-China, probably started it. The air of Kunming is far too serene for tortuous self-probing. But as the train gradually creeps its twisting way down the long hill, it passes through the tin-mining district. And at this point its uncomfortable lurches and jolts seem to insist on the stories one has heard of the manner in which tin is mined in Yunnan. Long narrow galleries, too small for a grown man, are driven into the hills. Little boys go in on their knees and stomachs, scrape down the ore and bring it out on their backs. As there are no props, the galleries are continually caving in. Sometimes on the little miners. In which case, since the children are probably dead anyway, the galleries are simply filled up from the outside and kept shut until the forces of nature have done away with the little bodies. At the end of which period, the gallery is again cleared of dirt and new little boys begin again. . . .

At Kunming I had not so much minded. In a normal vehicle I might never have remembered. But

the unsteady "Micheline" somehow hammered at the sore spot. By evening in the most torrid jungle at Laokai, I was angry with China. Why must the friendly, likeable Chinese continue to perpetuate such horrors? Why were they so obtuse to human suffering? What about their general behaviour? What right did they have anyway to fill the world with outcries against Japanese atrocities? As for myself, was I really being objective in my favourable judgment of them? Had I got to the bottom of their elusive Oriental temperament, at once so mild and cruel? I stayed awake for a long time in the sleeping car without being able to reach a conclusion.

In the airplane to Paris, in the long trying hours of flying anywhere between two and seventeen thousand feet above sea level, even at night in such fascinating places as Bangkok, Calcutta, Baghdad and Athens, I still thought of the children deep in those ghastly galleries, shrieking and dying asphyxiated while men outside stopped up the exits. . . .

The more I wrote about China, the sharper the twinges of scruple. And as I went along, day after day, jotting down my memories and impressions of the Far East, internal pressure grew. One morning the expected voice had become loud to the point of hearing.

Conscience: Really I must congratulate you on your new-found talent as a propagandist!

Ego: Oh there you are! You have been bothering me now for some time. May I ask for just what reason you presume to interfere with the honest exercise of my profession?

Conscience : Honest exercise, did you say ?

Ego : That was my word.

Conscience : Convenient idea of honesty you have.

Ego : What's eating you, anyway ? Kindly lay your finger on a single instance where I have consciously stated something that is not so. Or else, be quiet.

Consience : As if that were the test ! Yours is a dishonesty of omission.

Ego : I could not write everything. Newspapers are continually short of space. There is a great deal going on in the world outside China, you know. And my publishers wanted a little book.

Conscience : That's it, go right on equivocating. As though lack of space were the reason for your dishonesty.

Ego : Since you know so much, what was it then ?

Conscience : Half-conscious desire to spread propaganda, as I said at the beginning. You despise propaganda. But you want China to win the war. You dislike the Japanese——

Ego : Wrong. I dislike their politics. I favour a world consciously ordered by what I call decent people in accordance with certain ethical——

Conscience : Principles ! Quite so. And so you want to induce your readers into a favourable attitude toward China. To make it seem that the Chinese respect these principles you omit certain blemishes from your portrait of them. Not always consciously, perhaps. But often deliberately, as in the case of the children crushed or buried alive in the tin-mines of Yunnan.

Ego : I was not writing about Chinese methods of

industrial production. Naturally they are backward, like nearly everything else in China. Nor was it my task to describe the ancient rot so much as the new growth that is appearing in the midst of it. I never pretended to give a full length portrait of the Chinese. For that I lack both the knowledge and the time.

Conscience : But you invited your readers to condemn the Japanese for forcing narcotics on your friends ! Which is worse, to sell narcotics to foreign adults or to asphyxiate one's own children out of love of gain ? At least, if you mention one, oughtn't you to say something about the other ?

Ego : Not unless it comes within my subject. Poisoning the Chinese is a Japanese weapon in the war; the death of Chinese children in the tin mines preceded and is totally extraneous to the present conflict.

Conscience : If that is your criterion, why, having mentioned Japanese atrocities, didn't you mention how few Japanese prisoners ever reach Chinese headquarters or how the Chinese generals offer money just to have them brought in alive ?

Ego : I thought I had. If not, I am quite willing to. If this is all you have to reproach me for, you had better see a psycho-analyst.

Conscience : You cannot escape by insulting me. You dwelt on the Chinese absence of ambulances and doctors. Did you describe how a wounded Chinese with money could often get transportation to a hospital while one without money must walk or die by the wayside ? Did you tell how you saw—yes, actually saw—a Chinese officer drive common soldiers off that telephone truck with a whip which

he obviously wasn't using for the first time? You did not. It would not have fitted your picture of a likeable people observant of humane principles.

Ego : I suspected this had become the exception.

Conscience : Oh, you did! Well, you saw for yourself how opium growing and smoking was going on despite the Chinese assurances to the contrary——

Ego : And I wrote about narcotics in Chengtu and Kunming.

Conscience : But not that you were offered a pipe of opium in Hankow itself, right under the eyes of that convert to Methodism, Chiang Kai-shek.

Ego (triumphantly): But that was in the French Concession where Chiang has no power.

Conscience : You score your first point. Now let us talk a little about these Soongs you so much admire.

Ego : I cannot keep you silent if I would.

Conscience : In your description of the "Soong Dynasty" you did not think it worth while mentioning the charges of corruption commonly made against certain members. Is this your idea of intellectual honesty?

Ego : Certainly I heard the stories as everyone in China must, for they are told at dinner tables. But since when do you expect me to repeat every bit of scandal that I hear? Besides, true or false, I do not think them very important. The Chinese have always had lax notions about the legitimacy of using position and power for personal benefit. I gathered that there is less of this in China than before, no more.

Conscience : But that is not the way you talked to your young Chinese friends. To them you insisted on the need for giving the common man a square

deal, which he is certainly not getting now, if his morale is to be kept up. For after all it is the common man who is carrying the weight of China's war. You were told—I was with you and heard it—how many Chinese still see the war in terms of personal profit; you know how many sons of good families are being kept out of the struggle on principle by their families; you cannot but have witnessed the immense moral superiority of the common soldier to the officer.

Ego : Come, come, be fair. I wrote that.

Conscience : But did not dwell upon it. Once more you sought to paint the Chinese situation more favourable than it really is.

Ego : Have you any more bile secreted somewhere?

Conscience : It was not I who solicited this discussion. You yourself kept dwelling on China until I just had to recall you to complete sincerity.

Ego : Have you any more complaints ?

Conscience (somewhat wearily): Indeed I have! You are a Democrat: at least, I have heard you say so often enough. You seek the triumph of democracy. Can you believe that a Chinese victory over Japan will strengthen democracy in the world ? In your opinion (and please remember that I can see right to the bottom of you !) is Chiang Kai-shek a Democrat? Is T. V. Soong a Democrat ? Is your friend the Kwangsi general Pai (Pei) Hsung-chi a Democrat ? Or W. H. Donald ? Or the "land-reforming" Communists, for that matter—are they Democrats ? Can you make a State democratic by just saying so ?——

Ego : Hold on, hold on: why all the heat ? Just what difference does this make to us ?

Conscience : It is not for me to choose between political forms—merely to keep you straight about them. Can you claim to have been straight about China if you are afraid to answer them ?

Ego : Very well, but one at a time, if you please. China, you will admit, is at war. . . .

Conscience : Now none of that. It is you who are on the dock, not I. Chiang was just as little democratic before the war started; he was reproached for his high-handed ways by the "Young Marshal," Chang Hsueh-liang, as you can read in Chiang's own diaries, "Chiang did not become autocratic owing to any war need."

Ego : Have it your own way, but let us not mix democracy and liberalism.

To return to other questions: Chiang, in my opinion, is not a Democrat. Neither was Alexander Hamilton. But like Hamilton, Chiang is being impelled by another man's philosophy—namely Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles"—and by his own utterances to move towards democracy even though he does not trust the people. That is why he convoked the "People's Political Council" the other day.

Conscience : Oh that thing ! A false face ! Didn't it remind you of the Constitutional Convention you saw in Moscow at the end of 1936—trained seals waiting for their master to throw them a fish and barking their gratitude when they get it ?

Ego : It did not. I do not know whether it will be possible ever to make Democrats out of the European Russians; the Siberians as frontiersmen are admittedly another matter. But I sincerely believe that China is moving toward a democracy——

Conscience (ironically): Basis of the State now widened to include at least one whole family!

Ego: Shut up. Or else don't ask questions. T. V. Soong is a Democrat of a very peculiar sort. I admitted that he was domineering just as able people often are if they be not patient as well.

General Pai never made any claim to democracy down in his native Kwangsi.

Communism in China has so far been primarily a matter of land reform and opposing Japan: as the doctrine fades out in Russia it is quite possible that the Chinese sort of communism could come to prevail. This sort is certainly not incompatible with real democracy. I know nothing of Donald's political views.

Conscience: This from you. . . . Have you forgotten Adolf Hitler's "German democracy" and Stalin's new constitution, "a million times more democratic than any other"? You might try to be serious.

Ego: Very well. Call Chiang a *fuehrer*. Admit that government by one family is, in the long run, the darkest medievalism. Call the present economic organization of China feudal, proclaim the farmers to be grossly oppressed, the Chinese bankers an insatiate lot of usurers. Do all these things. It nonetheless remains that a Chinese victory over Japan would represent a triumph for democracy if only because it would make the defence of democracy in Europe and America so much easier.

Now are you satisfied?

Conscience: Relatively. Let us probe a little

deeper. Meanwhile you admit that China is not actually a democracy?

Ego: Certainly. But I sincerely believe that its fundamental trend is democratic, that no matter how long it takes, the democratic instincts of the Chinese masses will ultimately prevail and that in the meantime a Chinese victory over Japan can not only help save democracy in the West but conceivably prevent the other predatory States, Germany and Italy from winning a new world war. Therefore I am able whole-heart——

Conscience: You cannot possibly be whole-hearted about a State in which the principles of liberalism and individualism are daily spat upon.

Ego: To what are you referring?

Conscience: Do you call Donald a Liberal, with his intolerant talk whenever any Chinese opposes Chiang or goes counter to his ideas of how China should be run?

Ego: Donald has served China with complete loyalty——

Conscience: China as he conceives it. But a China without any of that tolerance, that broad human sympathy, that strictly formal justice alike for all, in short, that dwindling liberalism for which you struggle every day of your life.

Ego: It cannot come all at once. Liberalism and law and tolerance can hardly be promulgated during a great war among a people of illiterates who, as you properly insisted, sell their children to die in tin mines. Put it this way. By diminishing the chances of a new war a Chinese victory could, at the worst, bring about a fortification of Occidental liberalism,

for liberalism can, in the long run, only flourish in peace. But not in a peace of servile submission to violence or armed threats of violence. By defying imperial, semi-fascist Japan, soft old China has put itself in the category of Belgium in 1914. Attending the funeral of King Albert a few years ago, I could not but contrast the universal homage rendered to the man who defied the might of Imperial Germany, with the all but universal contempt felt for that militarist bully, the ex-Kaiser. At its best, however, a Chinese victory can mean the complete stopping of the present political rot—the tendency to return to the rule of the brute, the maniac and the moron. Therefore it is eminently proper to take a chance on China. Besides I have a personal liking for the Chinese.

Conscience: If I am not mistaken, you also like the Germans and the Italians. This eloquence of yours cannot quite satisfy me: and until I am satisfied, please remember, you will remain uneasy. . . .

Ego (angrily): Of course it does not satisfy me either. But I make a distinction between the (to me) failing of peoples who are really doing their best, improving, growing, and those who are deteriorating and ought to know better.

(Conscience raises tired eyebrows . . . ?)

Ego: Take the Russians, for example. Unquestionably for sheer frightfulness, the Russians are number one among great contemporary peoples. Their inter-party purges, their massacres of heretics, cannot be matched for cold-blooded cruelty in modern times. Cruelty, however, represents nothing new in Russia, a country that has never had any

proper civilization. But cruelty is not made a principle in Russia, though one might argue that it follows inevitably from an attempt to fit men into inhuman social forms. One might even say that the Russians are seeking in theory, on a vast human scale, a freedom entirely incompatible with their economic premises and that their ruthlessness is the logical result of disappointment. Moreover, owing to a combination of anti-imperialistic theory and vast area, Russia is no longer territorially aggressive, while rising nationalism has blunted the point of communist proselytism. On this account democracy can, if alert, safely ally itself with the Soviets in opposition to militant aggression.

Unhappily, in both Germany and Italy the situation is quite the reverse. Though the amount of physical frightfulness is incomparably less, neither of these countries has a valid excuse for its reversion to barbarism. The Italians can look back upon perhaps the most glorious past in Europe. Just before Mussolini there was in Italy a mild renascence of spiritual vitality in science, letters and the arts, as well as great technical ability. Mussolini deliberately strangled this new flowering in order to pursue the mirage of national glory on the cheapest plane, thereby preparing a new period of Italian decadence.

In Germany the situation is even worse. While unquestionably less profoundly civilized than the Italians (owing to the lack of Mediterranean tradition and to conquest by Prussia), the Germans had been one of the leading peoples of our time, a source of unlimited promise. Nothing seemed beyond them. But they arrogantly challenged the world, were

defeated and lacked the courage to face their own deficiencies. Instead of repenting the brutal aggression of 1914 and repudiating the essentially false philosophies of violence and immoralism that led them into it, they preferred to follow an Austrian "drummer" who laid the blame for their misery elsewhere. It is no excuse to allege that they came hungry and late to the imperialist banquet; for the banquet itself was already souring in the stomachs of the earlier guests. The proper line for both Italy and Germany, to say nothing of Japan, was not to dragoon their peoples into helotry in a belated attempt to wrest colonial and other possessions from their owners, but to champion anti-imperialism; not to attempt by increased population and brutality to extend their frontiers, but to help devaluate frontiers as such. Missing the proper course they threw themselves into the arms of charlatans who promised fulfilment through regression. The Germans were poisoned by pride, the Italians by wounded vanity. Thereby they and not Russia became the primary contemporary enemies of mankind. For whereas for a symbol for the Russian people one might select the uncouth figure of some Caliban late wakened from the clay, for Italy and Germany one is obliged to point to the example of Judas. And like Judas they will hardly obtain, or obtaining, enjoy, the reward of their betrayal.

In contrast with Russia, backward but facing the light, Germany and Italy, though more advanced, are deliberately struggling back into darkness.

China looks the same way as Russia. Though traditionally perhaps the most advanced of peoples,

China had sunk into deliquescence. Out of this rank disintegration the Chinese are obviously emerging. Under the influence of nationalism, the same force that is playing so much havoc in Italy and Germany and Japan. . . .

Conscience: Precisely. You applaud in China what you condemn in the European tyrannies.

Ego: Only to a superficial view. For whereas China has had too little national conscience, Italy and Germany and Japan are suffering from a festering excess of it, as the Pope pointed out the other day. While Hitler and Mussolini are busy urging the destruction of civilized values, the Chinese are turned in the direction of universality. Or so it seems to me.

Conscience: What sober reason have you for believing that this New China, of which there is much talk in your book, will not eventually turn into a new and vaster imperialist empire, with even mightier appetites than the States you so deplore, constituting an even greater danger to what you somewhat glibly call civilization; what guarantee is offered that Chiang Kai-shek will not, if successful, turn into another openly fascist leader, snatching his country from the ranks of your friends over into those of your enemies, as Pilsudski and his successor Beck did with renascent Poland?

Ego: I could allege several reasons; but fundamentally my confidence in the emergence of a democratic enlightened China is based upon an emotional intuition. China simply does not feel fascist, totalitarian, retrograde.

Conscience: Then you base an entire line of con-

duct, to say nothing of writing a booklet favourable to China, on nothing more solid than a hunch ?

Ego : Certainly not. Though I believe China to be evolving in the right direction, I should support that country even were I sure of later transformation into fascism. For in thwarting the Japanese aggressors, the Chinese will have hamstrung one of the contemporary world's three Public Enemies. By fighting and immobilizing one of them it has seriously reduced the chance of successful aggression elsewhere by the other two. After all, despite my interest in China, for me the real battle is being fought in the Occident. Already the Chinese are conceivably saving the finest Occidental youth from premature death, and the Continent of Europe from devastation. And even supposing that, Japan once thwarted and humbled, China should herself emerge some ten or twenty years hence as a new and more powerful aggressor, I would answer that the danger to democracy is now, not in a decade or two, when the wave of resurgent barbarism will either have triumphed or passed. Since more democracy is an absolute essential to a higher civilization or even to the preservation of the little that exists, at this moment the Chinese are truly defending the future of civilized man.

Conscience : Well roared, Bottom. Yet the prerequisite of optimism is that the Chinese continue to defend themselves. Having witnessed and described the pitiful weakness of the Chinese armies, the relative inefficiency of Chinese methods, the generally low level of the Chinese officers, can you continue soberly to predict a Chinese success ?

Ego: Conditionally, yes. Given adequate leadership, maintenence of the present high morale and new found unity, sufficient funds or credits, some economic development of the Chinese South-west, the possibility of obtaining regularly war material abroad and, finally, an open line of communications for the reception of this material, China ought not to be beaten. If China holds, it will be up to Japan to decide whether it wishes to limit its objectives and withdraw to the north with considerable plunder but great loss of face and the possibility of a new and worse war on its hands five years thence; or whether it prefers to continue an indecisive struggle until forced by sheer exhaustion to clear out, not only of occupied China, but conceivably from stolen Manchuria as well. . . . Always supposing there be no general war in the meantime. . . .

If this be propaganda, then, Conscience, make the most of it. Conscience! Conscience! Where are you?

I listened. There was no answering voice. Bored or satisfied, Conscience had gone to sleep.

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